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20 YEARS OF GI
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GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

APRIL 2013

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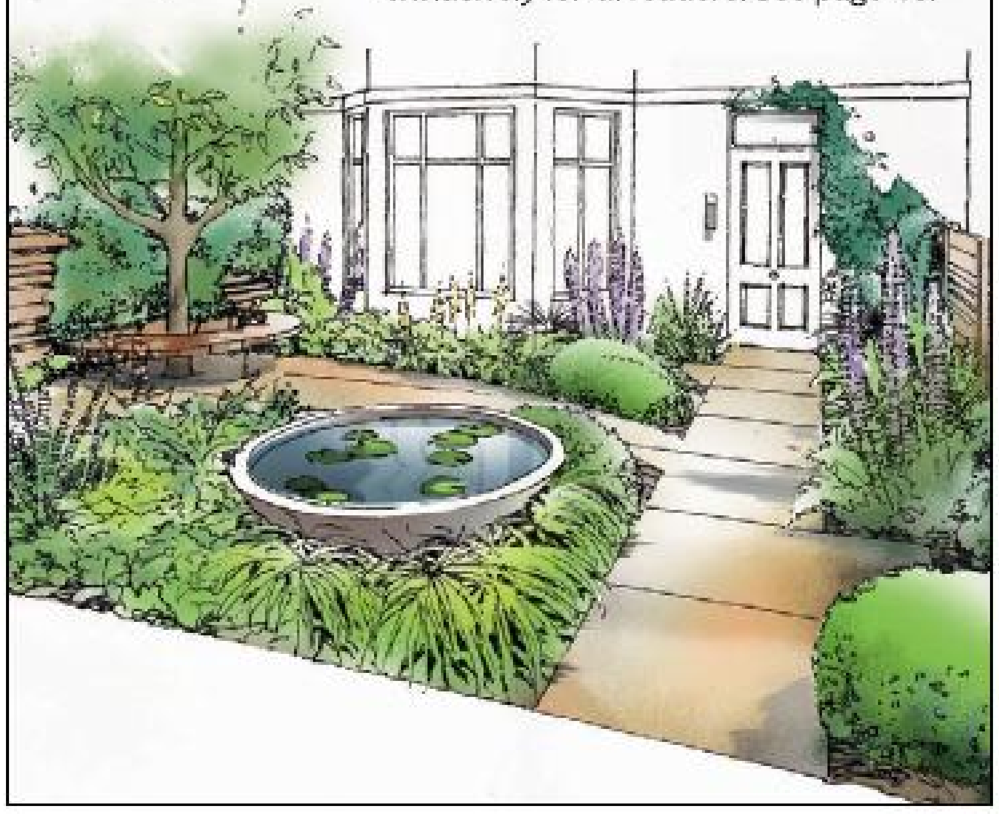
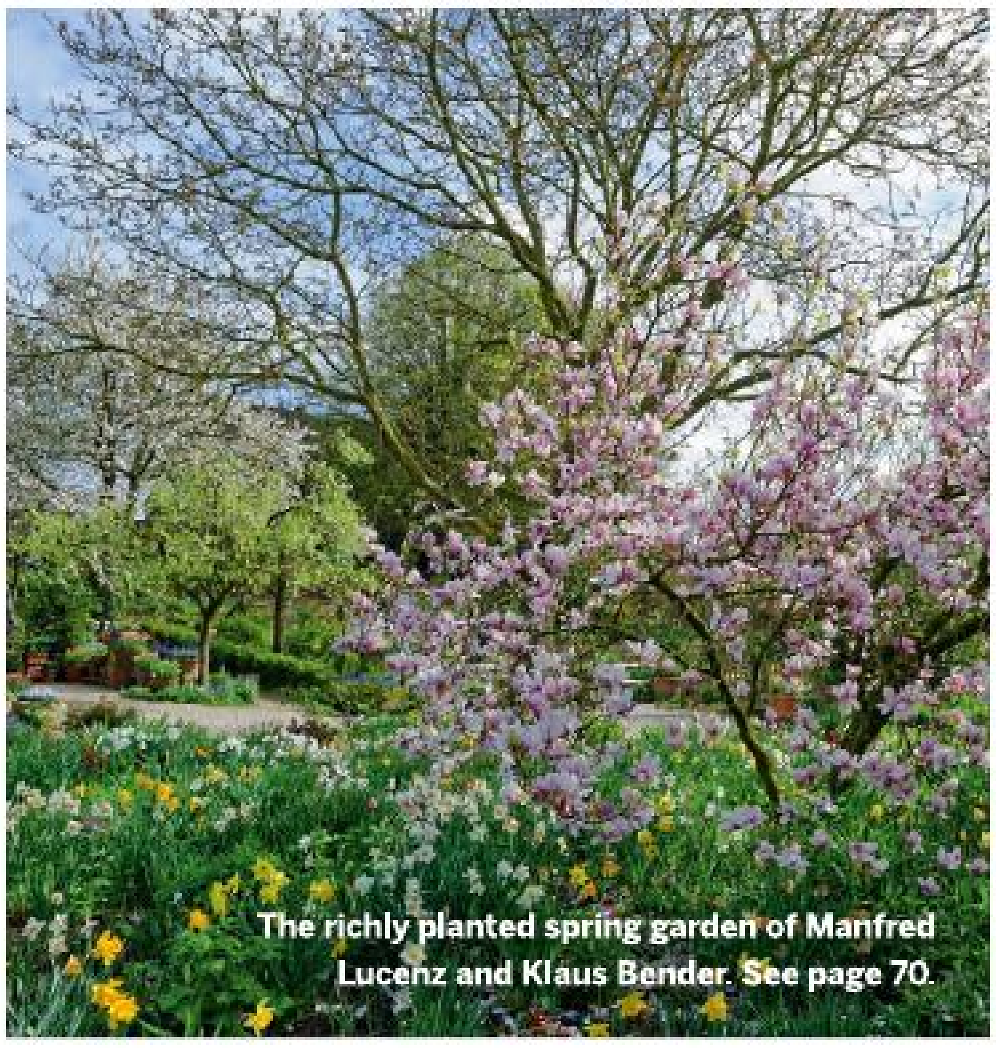
editor's letter

If readers come across any remarkably good front gardens, I'd love to hear about them. We looked through hundreds of images to find our cover shot, which goes some way to explaining why I'm keen to offer interesting designs for this often overlooked area of garden. Award-winning garden designer Ann-Marie Powell has designed three wonderful front garden plans exclusively for us and I hope that you find them as inspiring as I do. We also feature four beautiful spring gardens full of clever planting ideas; I visited the garden of Manfred Lucenz and Klaus Bender in Germany last year, and was fascinated to discover that even in the borders they grow their tulips in pots sunken into the soil, then lift them after flowering to be stored in their barn. It's a relatively time-consuming method of avoiding the dreaded tulip fire, but has proved a successful way of reducing the risk. April 2013 marks *Gardens Illustrated*'s 20th anniversary and to celebrate this milestone we're offering you the opportunity to win some extra special prizes, including the chance to win an overnight stay at Gravetye Manor in Sussex, two VIP tickets for the Chelsea Flower Show, three sets of Fiskar pruning tools and two places on a Bettys cookery school course. I hope you enjoy the issue, and here's to the next 20 years!

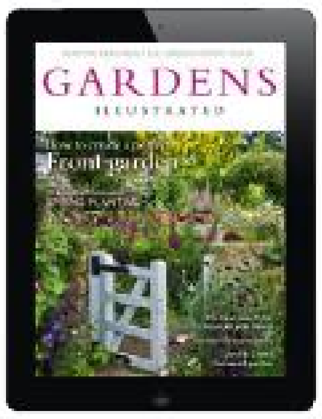
Juliet

One of three front garden designs by Ann-Marie Powell, commissioned exclusively for GI readers. See page 46.





The richly planted spring garden of Manfred Lucenz and Klaus Bender. See page 70.



GARDENS ILLUSTRATED is available as a digital edition – search 'Gardens Illustrated' on the App Store, Google Play or Zinio.com

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RICHARD LEE, PHILIPPE PERDEREAU

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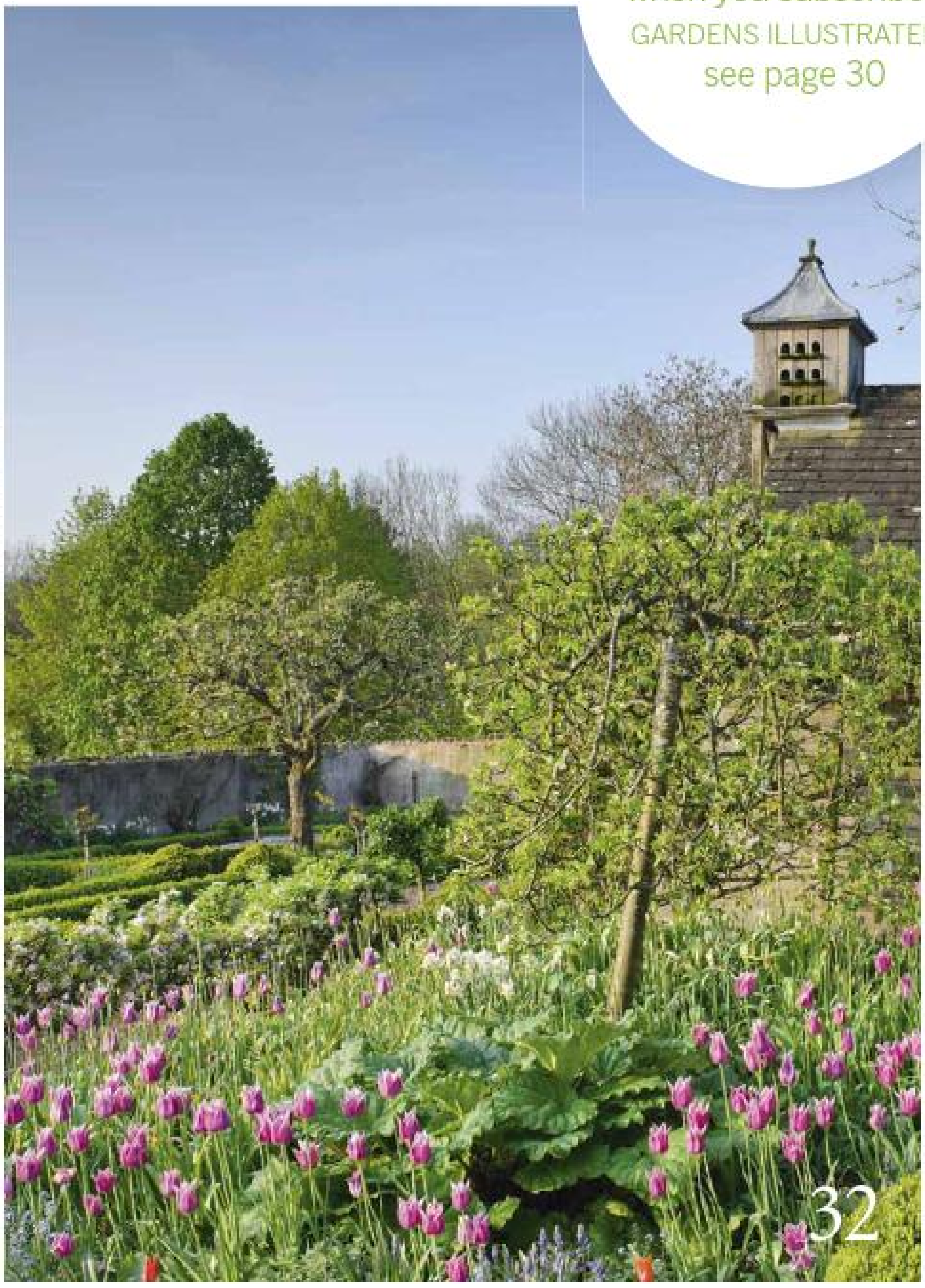

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- **Get a free book plus save over 30% when you subscribe* – see page 30**
- **Join us to celebrate GARDENS ILLUSTRATED's 20th birthday. We've gathered together a fantastic selection of competition prizes to be won – see page 122**

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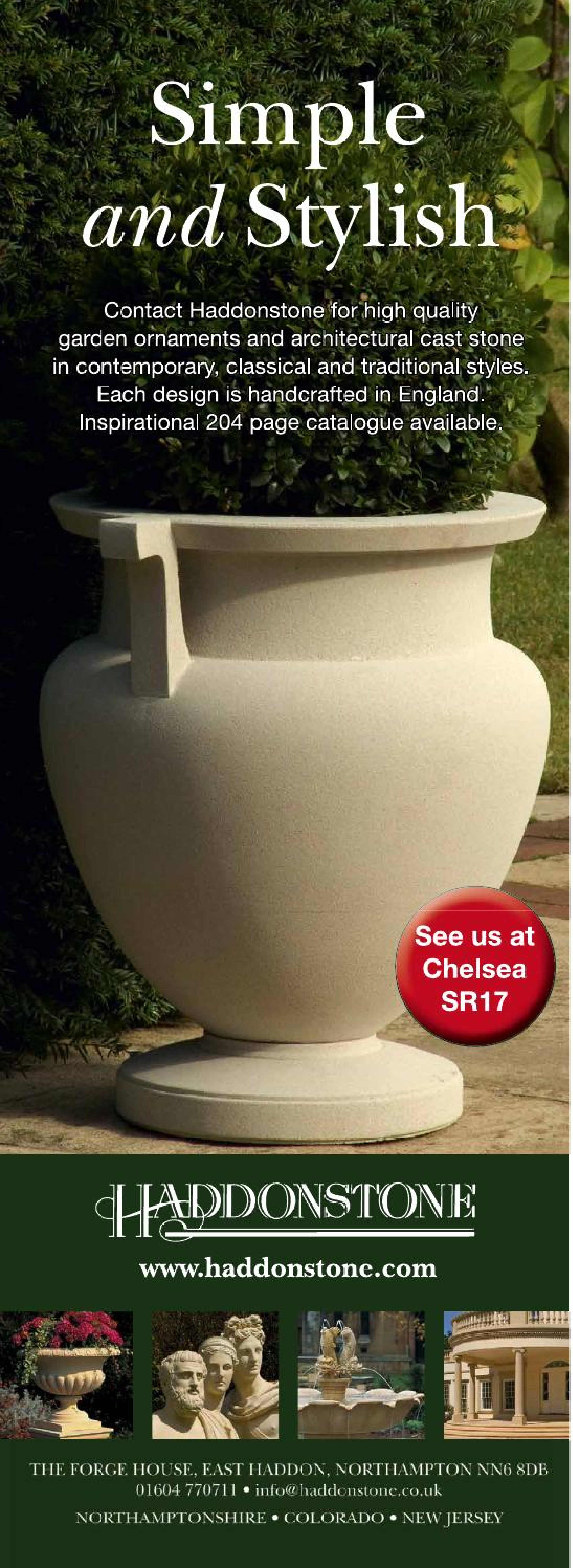

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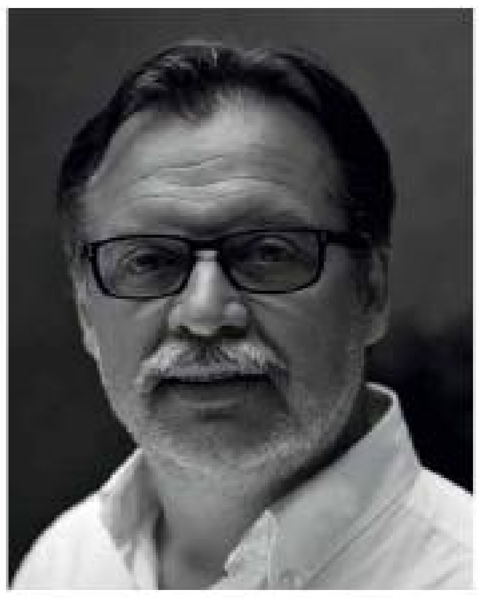

PHILIPPE PERDEREAU

Philippe has specialised in garden photography for more than 25 years. He has been published by magazines and books throughout Europe. You can see his work on the Lucenz-Bender garden on page 70.

"This is a good example of an 'ideal' garden. It comprises formal elements with more naturalistic planting."

GAYLEN MORGAN

PAULA DEITZ

Paula is editor of *The Hudson Review*, a New York magazine of literature and the arts. Her book, *Of Gardens: Selected Essays*, includes several articles first published in GARDENS ILLUSTRATED. She interviews head gardener James Priest on page 62.

"What greater pleasure than to walk and talk with James Priest in Monet's garden during different seasons?"

EDDIE JAMES

Our crossword setter lives near Birmingham's Botanical Gardens. With the help of his wife, Jo, he has created puzzles for over 30 years for many publications, including the *Guardian*. You can have a go at his latest puzzler on page 126.

"A top crossword setter used to compose clues while gardening – but I find gardening is so relaxing, my mind goes blank!"

STEPHEN ANDERTON

Stephen was a professional gardener before becoming gardening correspondent for *The Times* and has written several books including a biography of Christopher Lloyd. He gardens in the Black Mountains, high above Brilley Court, which he visits on page 32.

"This is a warm, rustic garden, not fashion-hungry, just right for an old farmhouse."

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READER
LECTURE

Gardens Illustrated Lecture

With Piet Oudolf and Jinny Blom

Join us for this year's inspirational GARDENS ILLUSTRATED talk at the Royal Geographical Society in London, Tuesday 21 May, 2013

We are delighted to be hosting once again the GARDENS ILLUSTRATED lecture, held at the Royal Geographical Society in London. This year our guest speakers are garden designer and nurseryman Piet Oudolf from the Netherlands, renowned internationally for his distinctive planting schemes, seen most recently in The High Line park in New York. Joining him will be Jinny Blom, award-winning garden designer, whose sumptuous plantings blend the formal and informal to romantic effect.

Chaired by Tim Richardson, garden design critic and chairman of the Chelsea Fringe, the lecture promises to be informative and entertaining and a rare opportunity to see these two names comparing and contrasting their work.

At time of going to press, the Premium tickets (which include a glass of Laurent-Perrier champagne, plus access to priority seating) have sold out, and standard tickets are selling fast. Book your ticket soon to avoid disappointment. Subscribers receive a discount on the price of tickets.

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED reserves the right to replace the speakers with other speakers of equal stature in the unlikely event that either of them are unable to attend. Please let us know when booking of any special access requirements. Tickets are non-refundable. Driving to the lecture is not advised. Nearest London Underground station is South Kensington. There is a cash bar.

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WALTER HERFST CHARLIE HOPKINSON

Lecture Details

- **Date** Tuesday 21 May, 2013
- **Venue** Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, South Kensington, London SW7 2AR

Order of Events

- **5.45pm** Doors open for Premium tickets only. Laurent-Perrier champagne served
- **6.15pm** Doors open for standard tickets. (Cash bar available.)
- **7pm** Lecture begins
- **8.30pm** Q&A session concludes
- **9pm** Doors close

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EXHIBITION

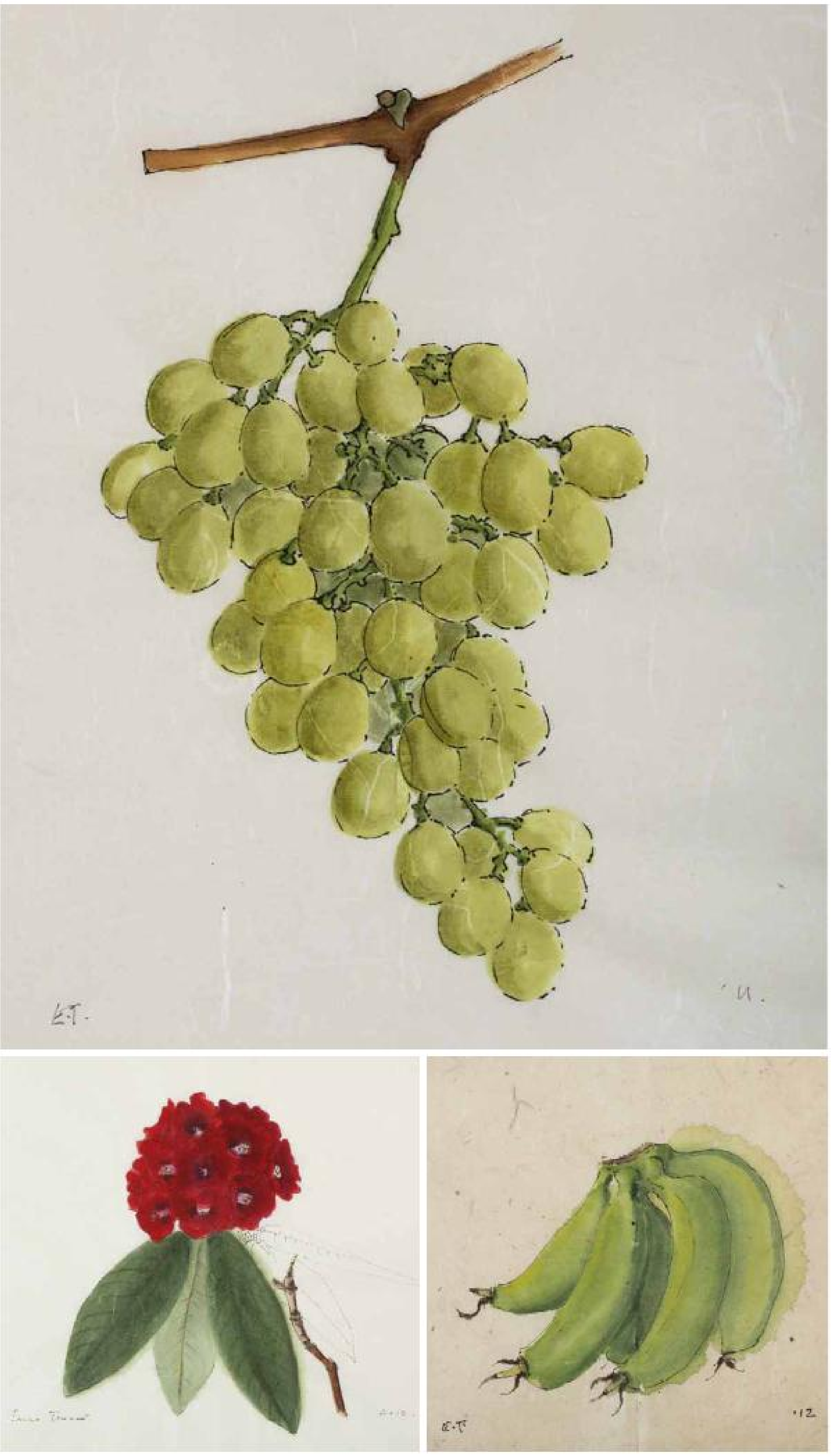
Painting plant history

Much of the greatness of the Chatsworth estate was due to Joseph Paxton (1803-1865), gardener to the 6th Duke of Devonshire – himself a plant enthusiast and fully encouraging of Paxton's horticultural vision.

This partnership, which saw many exciting plants grown in Britain for the first time, is celebrated in an exhibition by artist Emma Tennant (the sister of the current Duke of Devonshire).

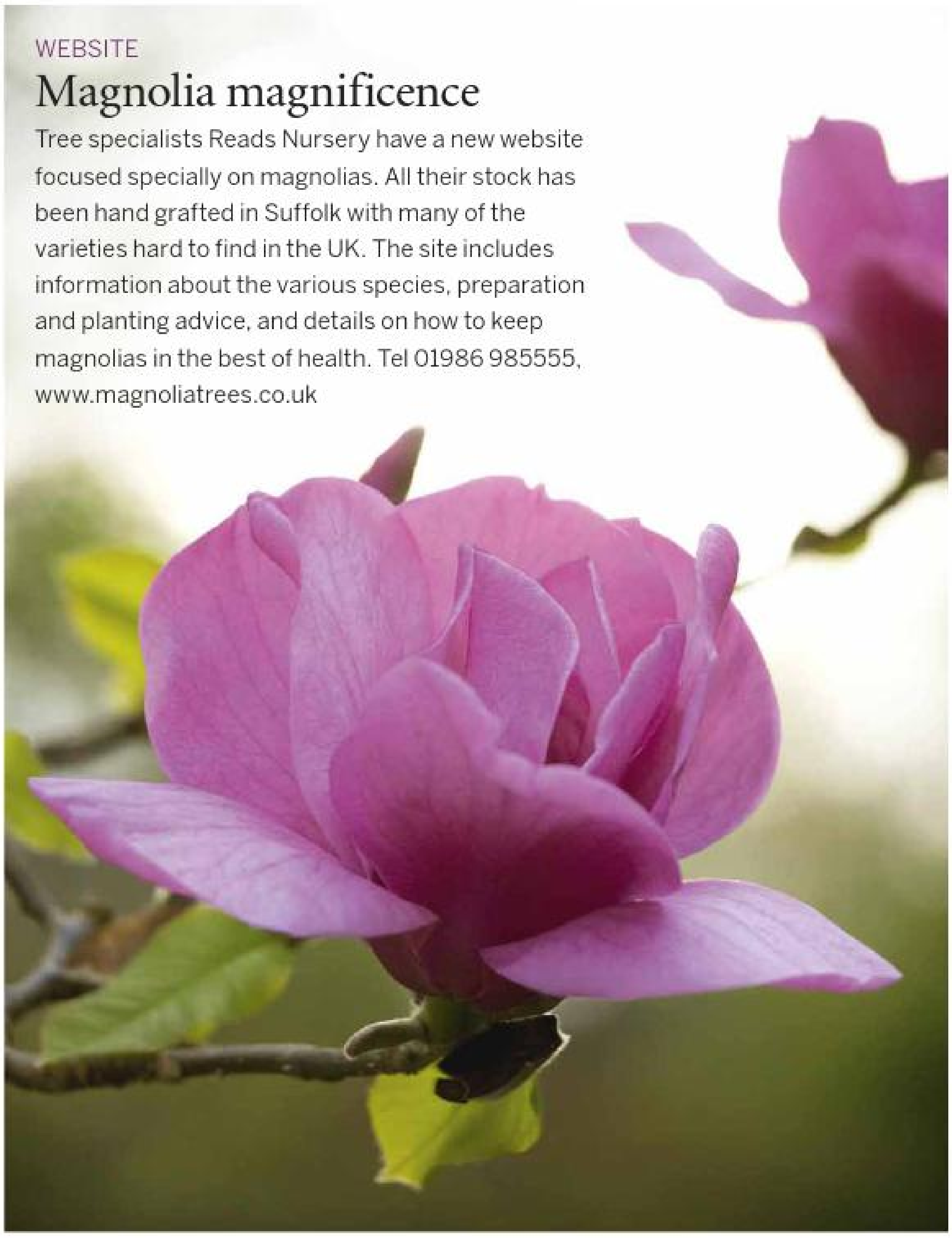
Inspired by the 6th Duke's plant list, found in the Chatsworth archive, Emma painted some of the plants still grown at Chatsworth, while others on the list she grew from seed before painting them. Pictures in the exhibition include *Cavendish Bananas*; these were grown by Paxton in 1836 to great success before he sent seedlings out to the Pacific region. One of these seedlings survived the journey as the forebear to all bananas grown in the Pacific. Also on show is *Grapes 'Muscat of Alexandria'*, which are highly desirable and labour-intensive hothouse grapes – at Chatsworth three gardeners at a time tend the vines – and *Rhododendron barbatum*, which will be in flower at Chatsworth in early spring.

From Seed to Watercolour: A Collection of Paintings by Emma Tennant. New Gallery, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire DE45 1PP. 24 March-30 June 2013. Included in entry to the house. Details on 01246 565300, www.chatsworth.org



Emma Tennant's watercolours celebrate the plants and flowers – many of them historic – growing on the Chatsworth estate.

BILL BURLINGTON



WEBSITE

Magnolia magnificence

Tree specialists Reads Nursery have a new website focused specially on magnolias. All their stock has been hand grafted in Suffolk with many of the varieties hard to find in the UK. The site includes information about the various species, preparation and planting advice, and details on how to keep magnolias in the best of health. Tel 01986 985555, www.magnoliatrees.co.uk

OPEN DAY

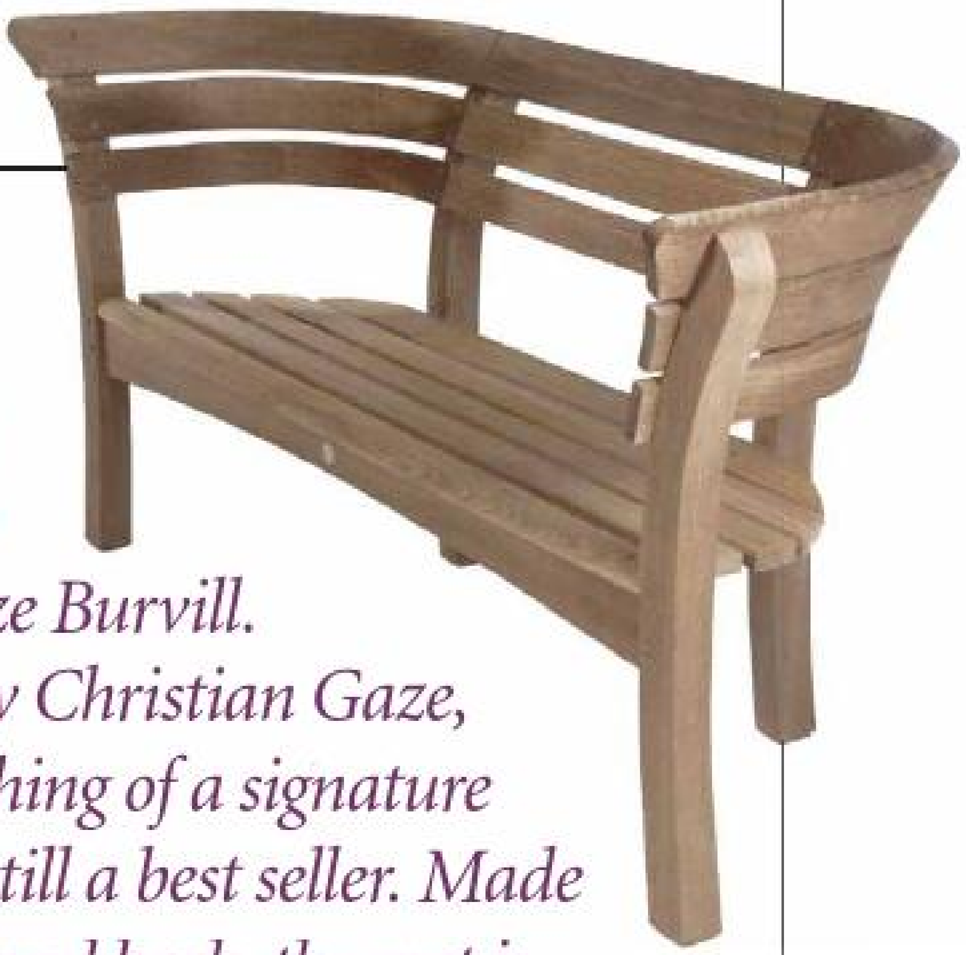
Herboretum events

This is an exciting year for Jekka McVicar. Not only does she take on the role of President of the Herb Society for 2013-2014, but her plans continue apace for the Herboretum at her former herb nursery just outside Bristol, where she aims to display over 650 herb species. Alongside a range of courses and workshops, Jekka will also be opening the farm on a selection of Herb Fridays throughout the summer – this month on 12, 19, and 26 April. On these days visitors will be able to buy herbs and view the Herboretum as it progresses. Further details on 01454 418878, www.jekkasherbfarm.com

GROW YOUR OWN

Blooming sprouts

Ten years in the developing, the Flower Sprout looks like a tiny cabbage with frilly leaves and purple streaks. The new vegetable has a sprout-like growing habit, but a much sweeter, milder flavour, more like kale. Sow seeds now for plants ready to crop over the winter months. Seeds available from most seed suppliers. For more information about the crop go to www.flower-sprout.com



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MAGNOLIA BY RACHEL WARNE; JEKKA MCVICAR: MARIE O'HARA / THE GARDEN COLLECTION

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New AGM winner crab apple *Malus* 'Comtessa de Paris'.

BEST PLANTS

Awards season

The Royal Horticultural Society's system of Awards of Garden Merit is an invaluable short-cut to knowing which plants work well in the garden. Regular trials determine which cultivars gain this accolade, while every ten years the complete list is reviewed to ensure that all AGM awarded plants are still worthy candidates. The RHS has just completed its latest overhaul with 1,900 plants being removed and 1,400 added to give a recommended 7,000 herbs, trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables. www.rhs.org.uk/agmplants

CUTTING REMARKS

Japanese gardening tools specialist Niwaki's range now includes the Kanenori loppers – strong blades of forged carbon steel, complemented by stout oak handles, at £75. And if you're a Niwaki fan it's worth noting that for £12 your Niwaki-bought secateurs, clippers and shears can be serviced and returned to prime working order. Tel 0845 474 1041, www.niwaki.com

YOUR OWN ART IN THE GARDEN

Garden memories

A lovely way to track the year and all your seasonal garden activities is to create an illustrated garden notebook. Gain inspiration from artist wildlife enthusiast Val Littlewood, who is to lead a series of monthly art workshops covering sketching and drawing styles, simple printmaking and writing on flora and fauna. Classes monthly until December, next date 2 April. Can be taken individually or as a ten-week block. Held at Barnsdale Gardens, Rutland, price £32 per workshop (discount with multiple bookings). Tel 01572 813200, www.barnsdalegardens.co.uk

MALUS 'COMTESSA DE PARIS' JONATHAN BUCKLEY / GAP PHOTOS

Diary

• The garden unfolding
Chris and Toby Marchant of Orchard Dene nursery talk about early spring performers. 13 April, 9.30am-3pm. £66 (£60 if booked online). West Dean College, West Dean, Nr Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ. Tel 01243 811301, www.westdean.org.uk

• Spring Flowers Feast
Highlighting Woottens of Wenhaston's collection of 500 auriculas, with experts on hand and plants available for sale. 13 April, 9.30am-5pm. The nursery's display garden is also open from Tuesdays to Sundays 9.30am-4pm (April to October) Woottens of Wenhaston, Wenhaston, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9HD. Tel 01502 478258, www.woottensplants.com

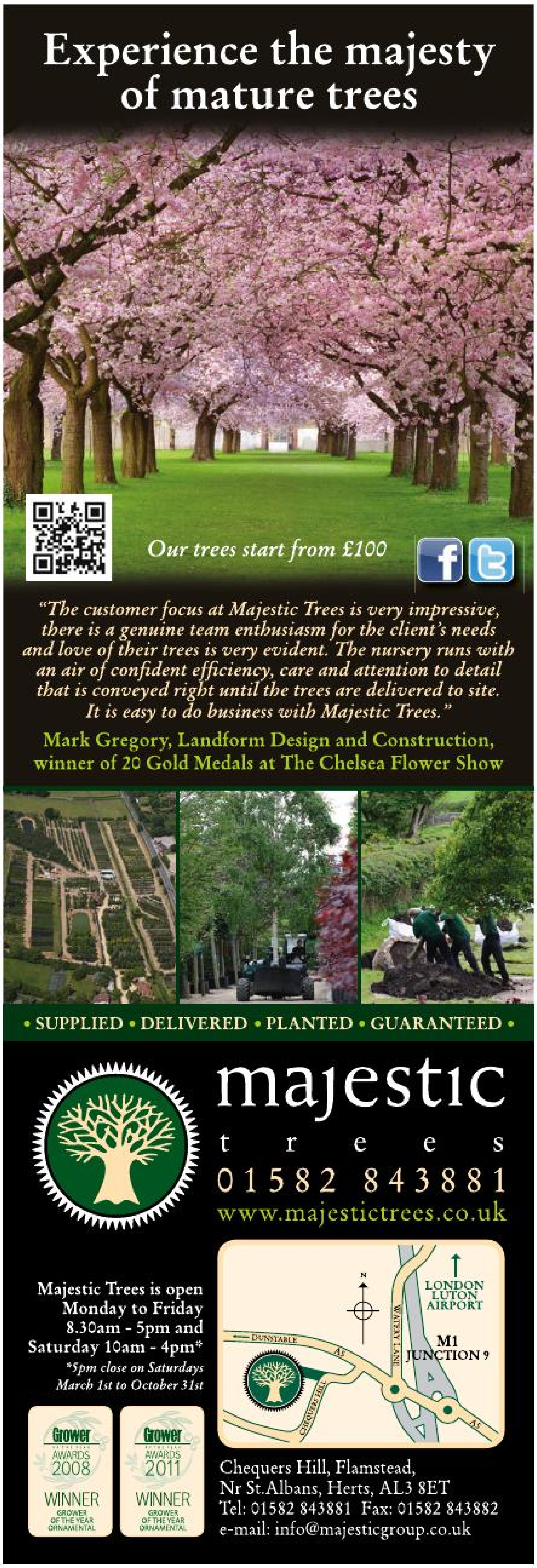
• Gresgarth Hall Open Day
Arabella Lennox-Boyd's own garden is open twice during the tulip season for those who would like to share Arabella's love of tulips. 14 April and 12 May, 11am-5pm. Gresgarth Hall, Caton, Lancaster LA2 9NB. Tel 01524 771838, www.arabellalennoxboyd.com/gresgarth/public.html

• Festival of Japanese Flowering Cherries
Batsford Arboretum holds the National Collection of Japanese Flowering Cherries, which – weather permitting – should be at their peak for the festival. 15-30 April, 10am-4.45pm. Arboretum entry £7. Batsford Park, Moreton in Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 9AB. Tel 01386 701441, www.batsarb.co.uk

• Gardening in small spaces: climbers and wall shrubs
Garden designer and writer Lucy Summers gets you to think vertically about plants and planting spaces to make the most of smaller gardens and courtyards. 16 April, 6.30-9pm, £45. Held in Brighton, East Sussex. Tel 01273 738207, www.thehouseandgardenschool.co.uk

• Alitex Spring Open Day
View Alitex's range of greenhouse structures plus hear a talk by Matt Cusack, regional National Trust head ranger on life after the Hindhead Tunnel construction in Surrey. There's also the opportunity to buy plants from Marina Christopher of Phoenix Perennials. 20 April, 10am-2pm. Free. Torberry Farm, South Harting, Petersfield, Hampshire GU31 5RG. Tel 01730 826900, www.alitex.co.uk

• Harrogate Spring Flower Show
Show gardens, specialist plant nurseries, demonstrations and a range of garden sundries to buy. 25-28 April, 9.30am-5.30pm (4.30pm Sunday). Tickets from £12. Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8NZ. Tel 01423 546158, www.flowershow.org.uk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GRANGE PARK OPERA

IFORD ARTS

Opera in the garden

Some of the finest gardens in the UK also host some of the best operatic performances. Here's a selection of note this year

GLORIOUS COUNTRY ESTATE

Garsington Opera at Wormsley, Buckinghamshire

The venue for Garsington Opera is a country estate complete with its own deer park and cricket ground. Each June and July the company stages firm favourites as well as rarely performed works. Highlights of 2013 include Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Rossini's *Maometto Secondo*. The venue opens at 3.30pm and a long interval allows guests to admire the rose garden and sweeping lawns. Meet friends in the champagne bar, picnic by the water's edge or dine in a marquee.

01865 368201, www.garsingtonopera.org

WORLD-LEADING OPERA

Glyndebourne, East Sussex

The 1,200-seat theatre in the grounds of Glyndebourne House is one of the great opera houses of the world. From May to August it features six productions, with 2013 highlights including Verdi's *Falstaff* and Britten's *Billy Budd*. With grounds opening to guests at 3pm and a 90-minute interval, there is time for a leisurely picnic or to explore the gardens. There are formal borders, an urn garden, the Figaro garden and a vegetable garden, as well as an orchard meadow and croquet lawn.

01273 813813, www.glyndebourne.com

STAGED BY A ROMANTIC RUIN

Grange Park Opera, Hampshire

Grange Park Opera has a rural parkland setting, beside the ruin of a 19th-century Greek revival house set beside a lake. The company stages performances in a 550-seat auditorium and special schemes give subsidised tickets to under-35s. In 2013 the programme includes Poulenc's *Les Carmélites* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. There is a restaurant, picnic marquee and a champagne bar. Grounds open at 3.30pm and guests can enjoy a picnic on the terrace or parterre of the house.

01962 737360, www.grangeparkopera.co.uk

DELIGHTFUL ITALIANATE GARDENS

Iford Arts, Wiltshire

The Grade I-listed hillside gardens created by architect Harold Peto at Iford Manor are the setting for an intimate jazz and opera festival each summer. Opera is staged in the round for an audience of just 90 in the garden's Italianate Cloister building. Highlights for 2013 include Verdi's *La Traviata* and Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne*. Gates open at 6pm with most events starting at 7.30pm and a 30-minute interval. Visitors may enjoy a peaceful summer's evening picnic in the tranquil gardens.

01225 868124, www.ifordarts.co.uk

GRANGE PARK OPERA: CLAIRE ROUTH; IFORD ARTS: ROB COLES; GLYNDEBOURNE: LEIGH SIMPSON; GARSINGTON OPERA AT WORMSLEY: CLIVE BARDA

LONGBOROUGH

GLYNDEBOURNE

GARSINGTON OPERA AT WORMSLEY

CONVERTED COTSWOLD BARN

Longborough Festival Opera, Gloucestershire

Longborough Festival Opera is British country house opera with an ambitious programme. In 2013 it will present Wagner's epic *Der Ring des Nibelungen* as well as Puccini's *La Bohème*. In the heart of the Cotswolds, Longborough overlooks the Evenlode valley. Performances start at 6.30pm with a 90-minute interval. Guests may picnic in the grounds or book a place in a marquee, restaurant or a private dining venue.

01451 830292, www.lfo.org.uk

GREEN OASIS IN LONDON

Opera Holland Park, London

Holland Park is a peaceful refuge in West London, with 54 acres of parkland, woodland and gardens, including the ruins of a Jacobean mansion that form the backdrop to an open-air theatre. The season runs from June to August and the 2013 bill includes Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, Todd's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. Holland Park has several formal garden areas to explore. There's a bar in the theatre, or you can picnic in the park.

020 7361 3570, www.operahollandpark.com

FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE ATMOSPHERE

West Green House, Hampshire

West Green House Garden offers a series of delightful spaces surrounding a beautiful 18th-century house. In 2013 West Green presents Weill's *The Threepenny Opera* and Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*. The garden opens at 5pm for 7pm performances – and there's plenty to explore. The series of garden 'rooms' include a grand water staircase and a Persian water garden. During the 75-minute interval guests may enjoy a picnic on the lawn or book a pavilion by the lake. A light show is a spectacular addition to the evening.

01252 844 611, www.westgreenhouse.co.uk

ARTS AND CRAFTS GARDEN

Woodhouse Copse, Surrey

Woodhouse Copse is an Arts and Crafts house set in a woodland garden designed by Gertrude Jekyll. It is the home of society Music at Woodhouse, which runs a series of classical concerts (held in a small hall), and opera, perfomed in an amphitheatre overlooking a lake. In early September 2013 Woodhouse will be staging Bizet's *Carmen*. Picnics, walks in the gardens and boat rides are very much part of the experience.

01306 730956, www.woodhousesounds.com

Touring operas

Bampton Classical Opera

Bampton Classical Opera stages accessible performances with a relaxed atmosphere. Its 2013 productions include Mozart's *La Finta Semplice* at The Deanery Garden (19-20 July) and at Westonbirt School (25 August).

01993 851876, www.bamptonopera.org

Garden Opera Company

Garden Opera Company tours scaled-down productions performed in English. This year the repertoire includes Bizet's *Carmen* at Stubbings Nursery in Berkshire (26-27 July), and Verdi's *La Traviata* at Inner Temple Garden in London (20 June).

020 7241 3563, www.gardenopera.co.uk

Illyria

Illyria tours open-air theatres with a small cast and new talent. In 2013 they visit Hever Castle in Kent with Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* (9 August). Guests may enter from 6.30pm for 8pm. Call 01763 866114 or visit the website at www.heverfestival.co.uk for tickets.

www.illyria.uk.com

London Festival Opera

This private opera company brings together artists from British companies including the Royal Opera and English National Opera. In 2013 its performances include highlights of Bizet's *Carmen* hosted at Crow's Hall in Suffolk (25 May). Gates open at 4pm. Visit the website at www.crows-hall.com for tickets.

020 7223 5456, www.londonfestivalopera.co.uk

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*See online for terms & conditions. Offer ends April 30th, 2013.

Neil Hoad

Now part of the garden team at Powis Castle, horticulture is Neil's second career, after moving on from furniture restoration to take a place on the National Trust Careership Scheme just three years ago

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest gardening memory Visiting my grandparents' garden and helping to collect runner beans for dinner.

First plant love I don't really have a first plant love, I just remember the family gardens of my youth as being safe places where I could be free to create any adventures that my imagination could conjure.

Who has inspired your career the most? Changing careers after 25 years as a cabinet maker and furniture restorer was a big step to take and Simon Larkin, head gardener at Lytes Cary Manor where I did some volunteer work, really helped me on my way by sending me on training courses and passing on his knowledge to me.

Three most worthwhile tips for every gardener Right plant for right place, don't persevere trying to grow a plant in the wrong position or soil type, life is too short. If a favourite plant dies, look on it as an opportunity to try something new, not as a loss. Make sure you leave yourself time to sit back and enjoy all of your hard work.

Dream plant destination That would be Japan. The symbolism and the use of different elements to create a harmonious whole is something that I greatly admire and it would be fantastic to explore the wider landscape of the country to see the natural elements that inspire this approach to gardening.

Unsung hero of the plant world The lawn – they are generally abused and neglected over the course of a year but provide an important breathing space in between the hustle and bustle of the borders and planting schemes that people always focus on.

What principles have guided your attitude to horticulture? If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing well. I also appreciate the way the National Trust takes a more considered approach to work and projects.

What plant would you take with you if you had to leave a garden in a hurry? I would probably take a *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* as it is a really good tree for three seasons, especially the golden leaves in autumn that have that unique candy floss smell.

Favourite gardening book Ken Thompson's *An Ear to the Ground* really helped me when I was going through my careership exams. His books give a clear understanding of the science and botany of the plant word, presenting it in a very readable format.

- **Contact email address: neil.hoad@nationaltrust.org.uk**

SHOT ON LOCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL BOTANIC GARDEN

Tulipa 'Red Shine'

A flawless and exciting lily-flowered tulip, with vivid, deep ruby red flowers and outwardly reflexed petals resulting in a rather exotic yet elegant figure. The flowers glisten in a silky sheen, reflecting the light as they hold themselves proud on upright slender stems. Used en masse, 'Red Shine' makes a dramatic impression, opening wide on warm sunny days to reveal its murky violet blue centre. Flowers keep their shape for a remarkably long time, eventually becoming quite lax with age. Looks amazing performing among a carpet of rich green young lupin leaves before being swallowed up by its advancing host. Remains perennial if it likes you.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 60cm x 15cm. AGM*.
ORIGINS Raised in 1955 by CV Hybrida.
CONDITIONS Sun in moist, well-drained soil.
HARDINESS RATING† RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.
SEASON April/May.

April plants

Spring is well and truly here, which means tulips dominate this month's choice of the finest plants for your garden

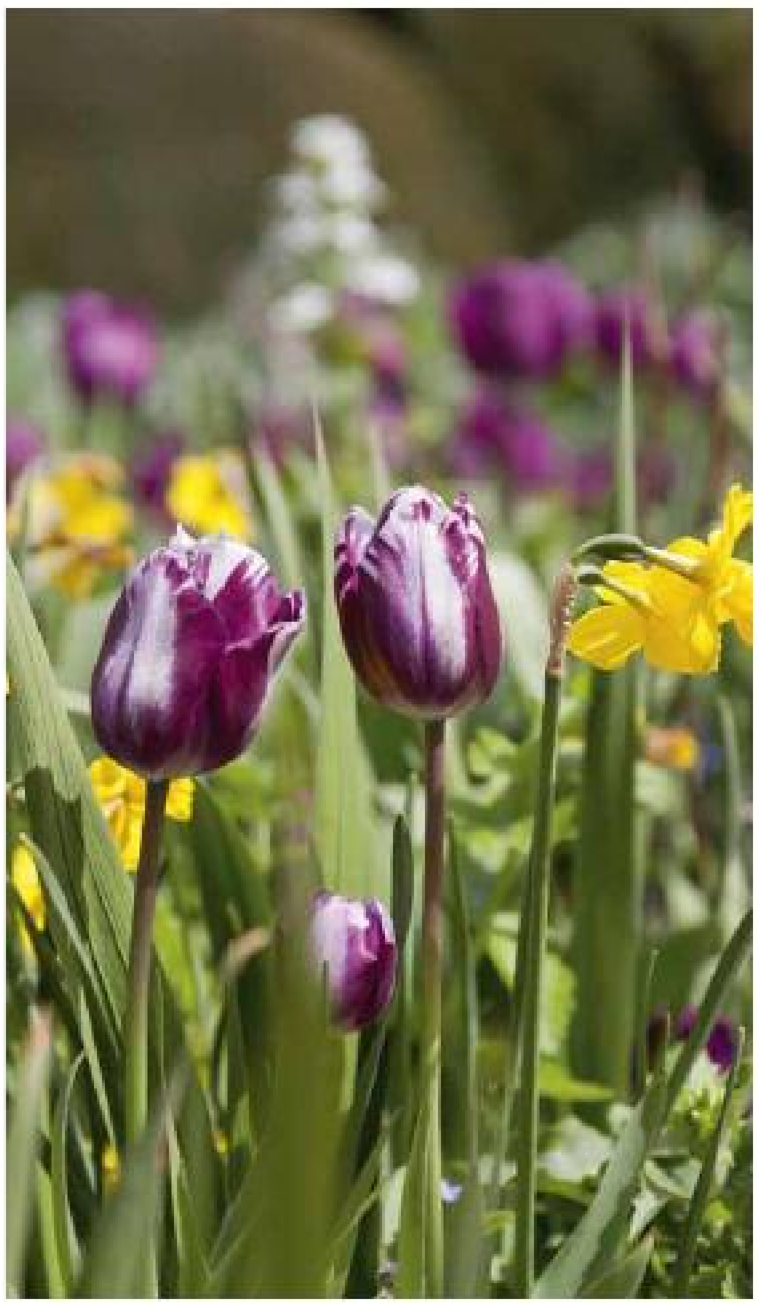
WORDS **FERGUS GARRETT** PHOTOGRAPHS **SHARON PEARSON**

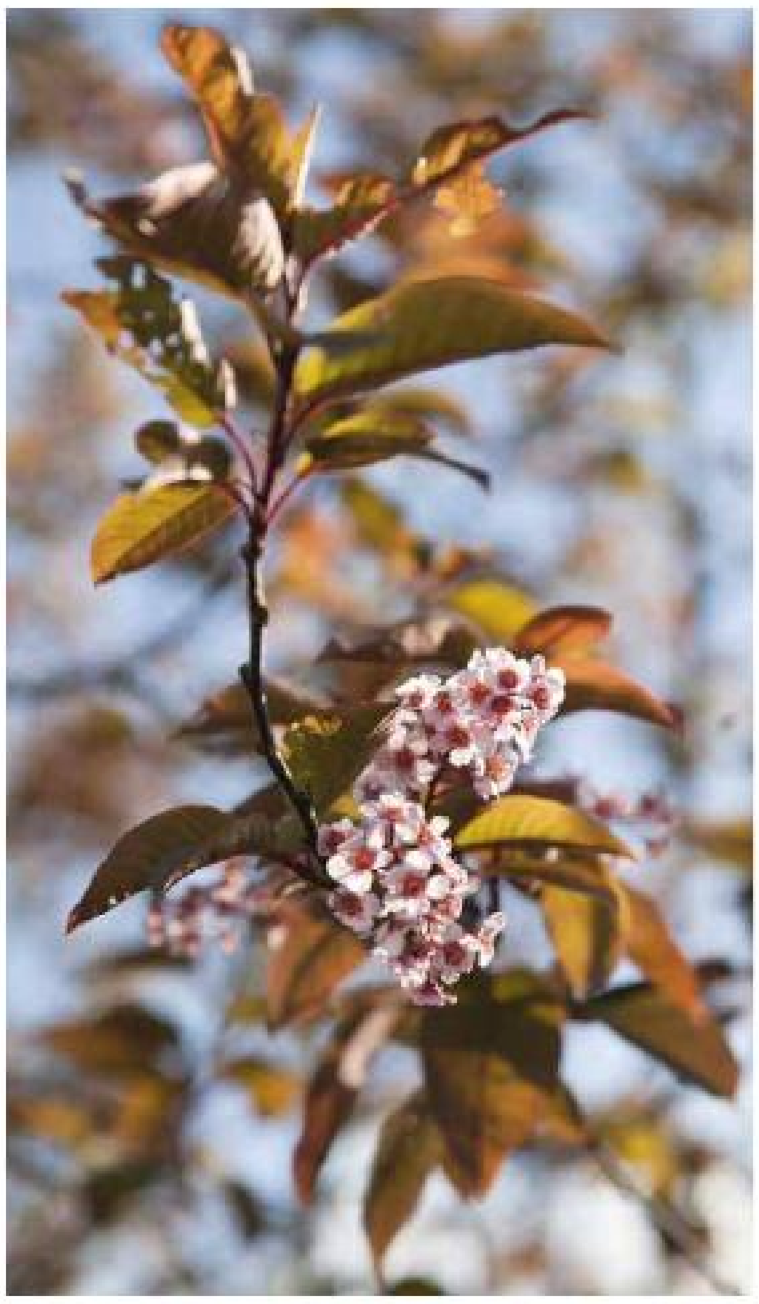
Fergus Garrett is a plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex. He also lectures, writes and serves on Royal Horticultural Society committees

Tulipa 'Bleu Aimable'

A single late, shallow-cupped chubby tulip held on sturdy stems, with flowers washed in intricate shades of lavender and mauve, paler around the edges. With age the colour intensifies as the petals pucker and twist, casting shadows on itself. With a rise in temperature the flowers open, revealing an enchanting base suffused in waves of marbled metallic blue, with turquoise stained filaments carrying charcoal black anthers around a creamy white pistil. Old bulbs regularly 'break', resulting in dramatic flowers streaked in purple, mauve and white (as pictured).

HEIGHT/SPREAD 55cm x 15cm.
ORIGINS Raised 1916 by EH Krelage & Son.
HARDINESS RATING USDA 3a-9b.
CONDITIONS Full sun in moist but well-drained soil.
SEASON April-May.



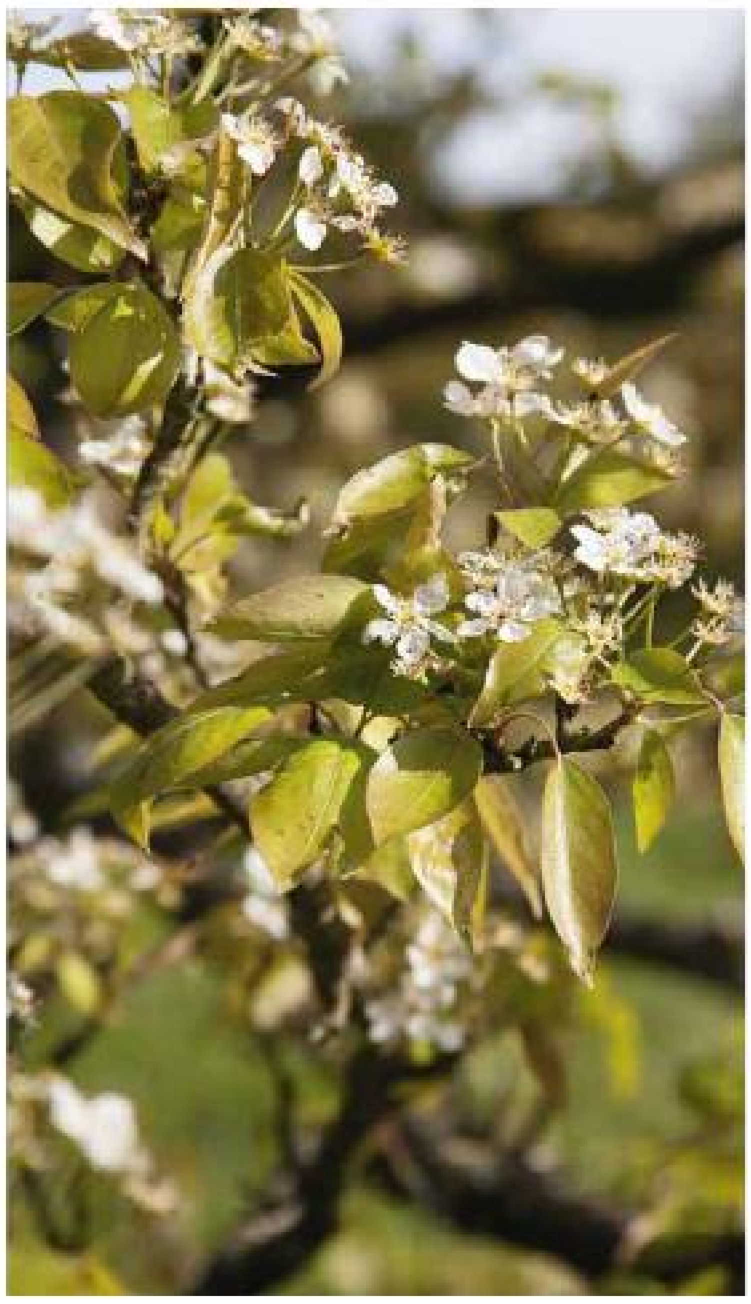


Prunus padus 'Colorata'

A charming medium-sized open textured tree characterised by a distinctly gaunt appearance. Its loose, rounded crown is made up of a criss-cross of long thin, dark coloured drooping branches, which in spring are dressed in reddish bronze leaves. These fade to sombre green. The gappy five-petalled flowers are pale pink with creamy green centres. Small, rounded, bitter fruit with glossy skins follow before autumn turns the scene orange red.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 12m x 6m. AGM.
ORIGINS A clone of the native Bird Cherry discovered in Sweden in the 1950s.
HARDINESS RATING RHS H4, USDA 3a-8b.
CONDITIONS Full sun. Best on neutral to alkaline, moist yet well-drained soils.
SEASON April-May for foliage and flowers. October-November for autumn colour.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society
†Hardiness ratings given where available



Pyrus pashia

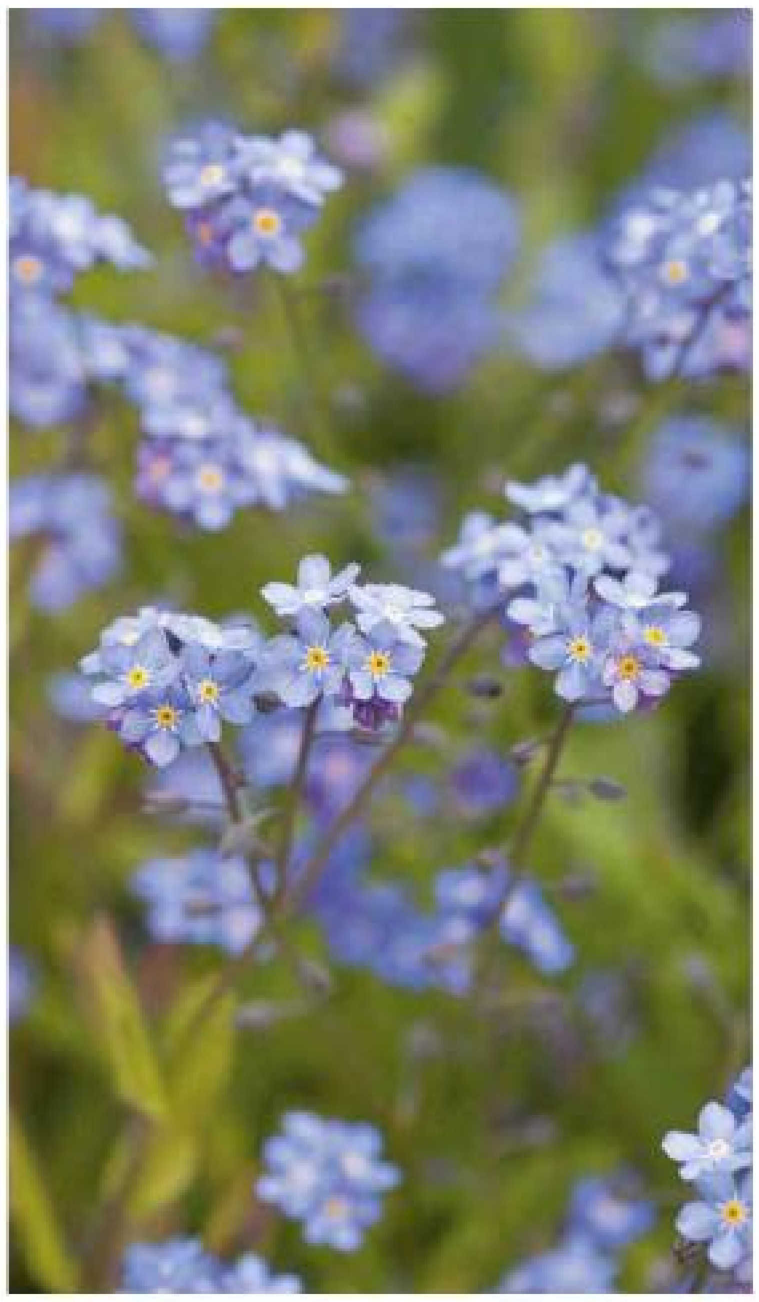
A highly variable small spiny tree, awkward and gawky when young with long reaching branches stretching outwards lopsidedly. With age chaos gives way to grace and elegance as a distinct open and oval crown develops. Flowers are white, blushed pink in bud, and punctuated with a galaxy of prominent dark red anthers. They are carried in compact clusters on downward arching stems smothering the tree from tip to toe in spring. Fruit resembling miniature russet apples follow.

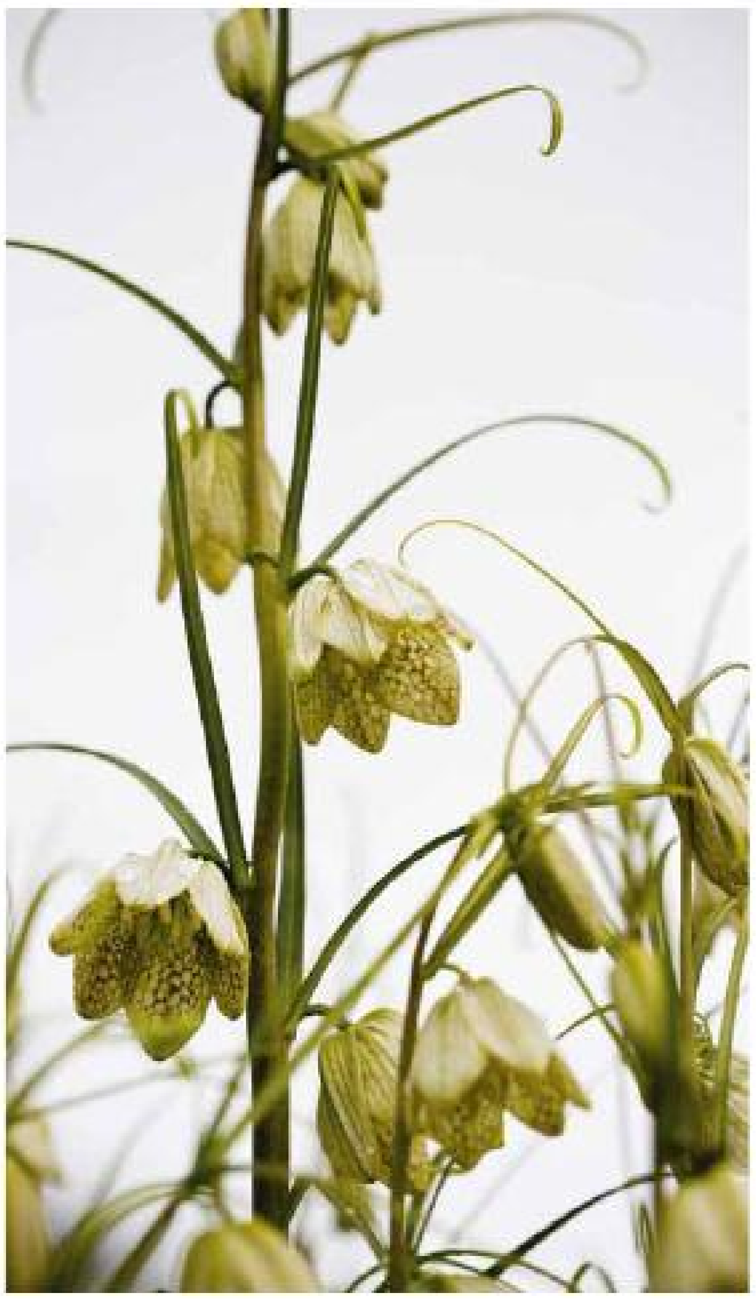
HEIGHT/SPREAD 8-12m x 6m.
ORIGINS Wide distribution from Afghanistan throughout the Himalayan region from Burma to western China.
CONDITIONS Sun to semi-shade, most soils.
HARDINESS RATING USDA 5a-9b.
SEASON Flowering March-April.

Myosotis sylvatica 'Bluesylva'

A showy forget-me-not, which thankfully has escaped the dwarfing curse of modern plant breeders. Relatively compact compared to the wild species, but still able to extend its arms through neighbours, linking the border community together. Its bright flowers, pierced by a pretty yellow eye, are slightly darker than the norm, and are held in loose helicoid cymes, densely packed to make a sea of blue. This abundance has earned it a glowing reputation among gardeners. Best sown in situ or in pots (June or July), pricked out and grown on before transplanting.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 30cm x 20cm. AGM.
ORIGINS Selection of the European species *Myosotis sylvatica*.
CONDITIONS Sun/part shade in most soils.
HARDINESS RATING USDA 3a-8b.
SEASON Flowering April-June.





Fritillaria verticillata

This willowy fritillary has widely open hanging cups of pale creamy green flowers, faintly chequered on the outside and more dramatically tartan within. These hang off long slender grey-green stems softened by a lattice work of thin, arching, grey-green leaves arranged in whorls. Towards the top the leaves gradually develop into curling tendrils that twist and turn, giving the plant great movement and providing a trellis work within which the enchanting dangling bells can be shown off. Apparently, bulbs are cooked and candied in its native land.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 60cm x 30cm.
ORIGINS Altai Mountains in northwest China to Russia.
CONDITIONS Rich, well-drained soil in full sun or semi-shade.
SEASON Flowering April-May.

Places to visit

Fergus shares some of his favourite places to see plants at their best.

Crete

Crete is heaven for botanising, as it provides a home for over 1,700 species of wild plants. It may seem like a long way to go but seeing plant communities flourishing in the wild is an essential part of a gardener's education. If you really want to do your homework, be sure to go to specific locations such as the Plateau of Omalos to see drifts of *Tulipa saxatilis* subsp. *bakeri*.

Tulipa saxatilis subsp. *bakeri* on the Plateau of Omalos, Crete.

BOB GIBBONS / ALAMY

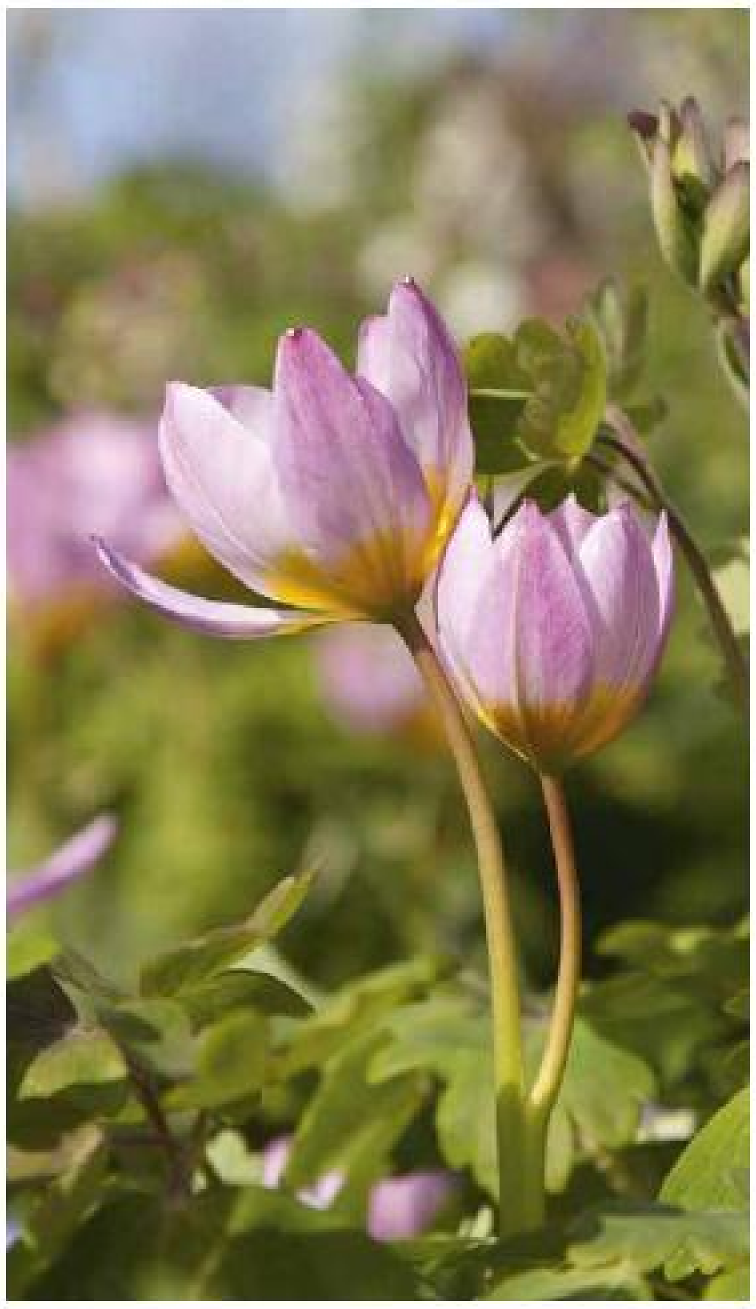
Great Dixter

Always a great place to visit, but spring is particularly fascinating at Great Dixter, where a wide range of tulips are used throughout the borders, integrated into permanent plantings in broad drifts as

Himalayacalamus falconeri

An exceptional bamboo that is unequalled in movement, beauty and elegance. Not the hardiest, but easy to grow if given shelter and semi-shade. First-year canes are naked, rich olive-green with brownish purple-stained joints. The following year the stems arch over heavily, weighed down by greenery, showering the ground with long narrow foliage arranged like fingers. Every March these older leafy shoots are pruned to the ground leaving behind a stark and dramatic skeleton – the effect is simply stunning.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 5m x 4m.
ORIGINS Native to northeast Himalaya, Nepal and Bhutan.
CONDITIONS Cool sunny spot or semi-shade in rich, moist but well-drained soil.
HARDINESS RATING USDA 8b-11.
SEASON All year round.



Tulipa saxatilis

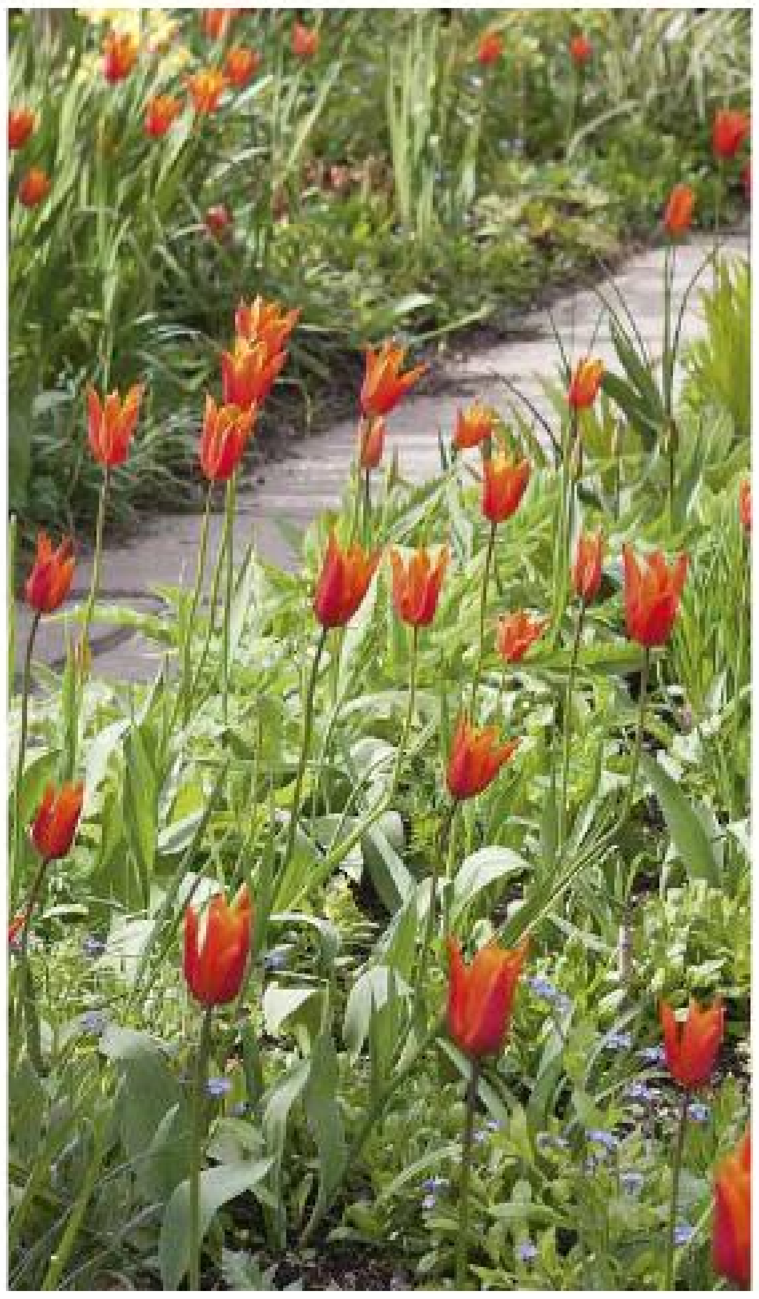
A species with distinct glossy, fresh green leaves rolled inwards and characteristically reflexed. The globular flowers are made up of broad pointed petals, each brushed with a well-defined, broad yellow base, rimmed with white. This blotch is so prominent that the flowers, borne on short stems, look noticeably bicoloured in crass pink and yellow. Not flamboyant but full of cheer. Was thought to be the same species as *Tulipa saxatilis* subsp. *bakeri* but recent chromosome counts have separated the two.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 20cm x 10cm.
ORIGINS Grows on rocky slopes, crevices, and uncultivated fields scattered around Crete, Karpathos, Rhodes and Turkey.
HARDINESS RATING USDA 3a-9b.
CONDITIONS Full sun in most soils.
SEASON April.

Tulipa 'Ballerina'

Beautifully proportioned with long graceful stems supporting narrow-hipped and bell-bottomed lily flowers. The petals are slightly incurved at first but relax and improve in shape. An outstanding performer, long-lasting in bloom, weather resistant, uniform and orderly – making it exceptional in bedding where its jagged silhouette, when used appropriately, can create patterns like a sultan's kaftan. More perennial than other tulips. Scents the air with a sweet fragrance of tangerines.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 60cm x 15cm. AGM.
ORIGINS Hybridised by JF van den Berg & Sons and registered in 1980.
HARDINESS RATING RHS H4, USDA 4a-8b.
CONDITIONS Full sun in any moist but well-drained soil.
SEASON Flowers April-May.



well as in pots and bedding displays. The meadows will be in full swing with large populations of snakeshead fritillaries and wild orchids.
Northiam, Rye, East Sussex TN31 6PH.
Tel 01797 252878,
www.greatdixter.co.uk

The Dorothy Clive Garden
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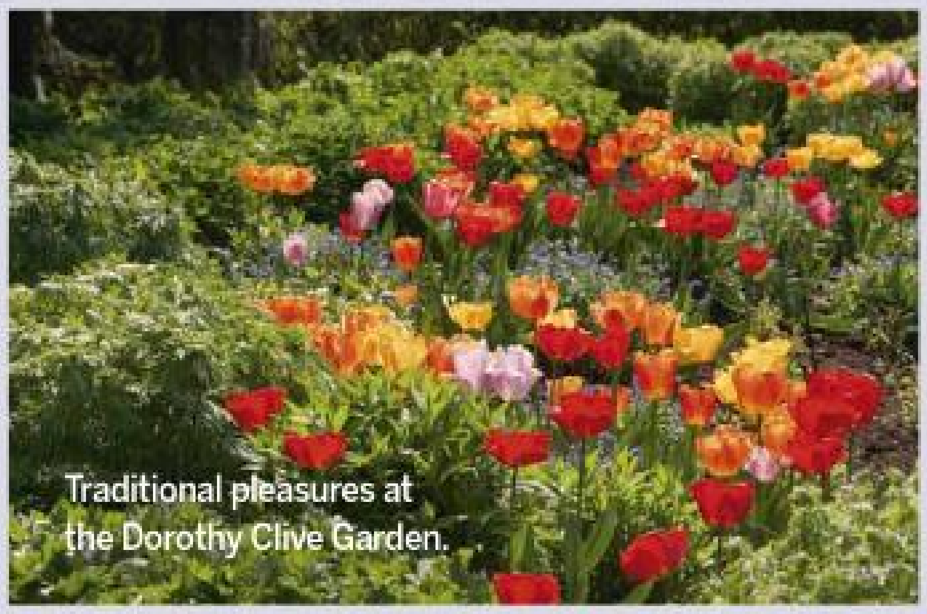

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The Diploma in Garden Design course provides a thorough training in garden design, enabling students to enter garden design at a professional level. It is an intensive year-long course, requiring commitment from you, but as such enables you achieve high standards in a relatively short time.

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Short Courses

A two day a week vocational diploma course offers students simple paving to advanced step design, they will study the various skills needed to confidently design walls, fences, structures and water features together with lighting and irrigation. Students will also acquire the knowledge necessary to produce construction drawings.

Students are taken through the principles and practices of good business and also have the opportunity to set up as Sole Traders, with guidance, whilst on the course.

Online Courses

Dynamic and inspirational, these three-month part-time courses will guide you through the design process so that you can create your own garden or living space. With ongoing support and advice from a practising professional and backed by the expertly produced course materials, you will develop your design ideas to produce a scheme that meets your needs on a functional and aesthetic level.

Each course is made up of an online induction and 12 sessions. You study just one session a week. The course takes about four hours a week, but don’t be surprised if you become so engrossed in design that you end up spending more time than this.

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Pale shoots of spring

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WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** ILLUSTRATION **PETRA BÖRNER**

Support herbaceous plants

Increasing day-length lures me outside, and it's having the same effect on the garden's pale green shoots. They are all perfection now but they will not always be so sturdy and flawless, and I am forcing myself to look ahead to their future downfall. My supports are rough and improvised: twiggy hazel stems pushed into the ground and bent and woven into each other. What matters is that they are there at all. The plants then grow through these lattice-like supports and – when their less pert time comes – drape elegantly over, still supported at the base. Of course I have occasionally done this in late June in a panic, after first signs of the flop, and the result is more awkward trussing than elegant draping. Act pre-emptively.

Nurse self seeders

Sometimes self seeders get a bit carried away, germinating so thickly there is no hope of maturity, or placing themselves helpfully mid-path. A satisfying spring job is to head out into the garden with a trowel and a bucket to lift the skirts of bigger plants and seek out seedlings that are not where I want them. Foxgloves wedged up against each other, *Verbena bonariensis* that will bloom unseen up the centre of a hedge, alchemillas that will be mowed out of existence: all can be teased up and replanted where I choose, or into little pots of compost.

Plant up dahlia tubers

I have only ever planted a dahlia tuber straight into the ground once. Once was enough. Each tender morsel of green it produced disappeared almost in moments. It kept trying, again, and again, until eventually it ran out of puff and gave it all up. Slugs' love for dahlias takes the plant out of the 'just plant it and hope for the best' department. Plant it and they will eat it. Once the foliage is older it is not quite so attractive, or at least it is tough enough to stand a chance against slugs, so I'm planting in big, deep plastic pots in the greenhouse for now. They will be planted out in a month or so.

Things to do

Look out for bright red lily beetles, and squash them on sight.

Pot containerised plants into slightly larger pots.

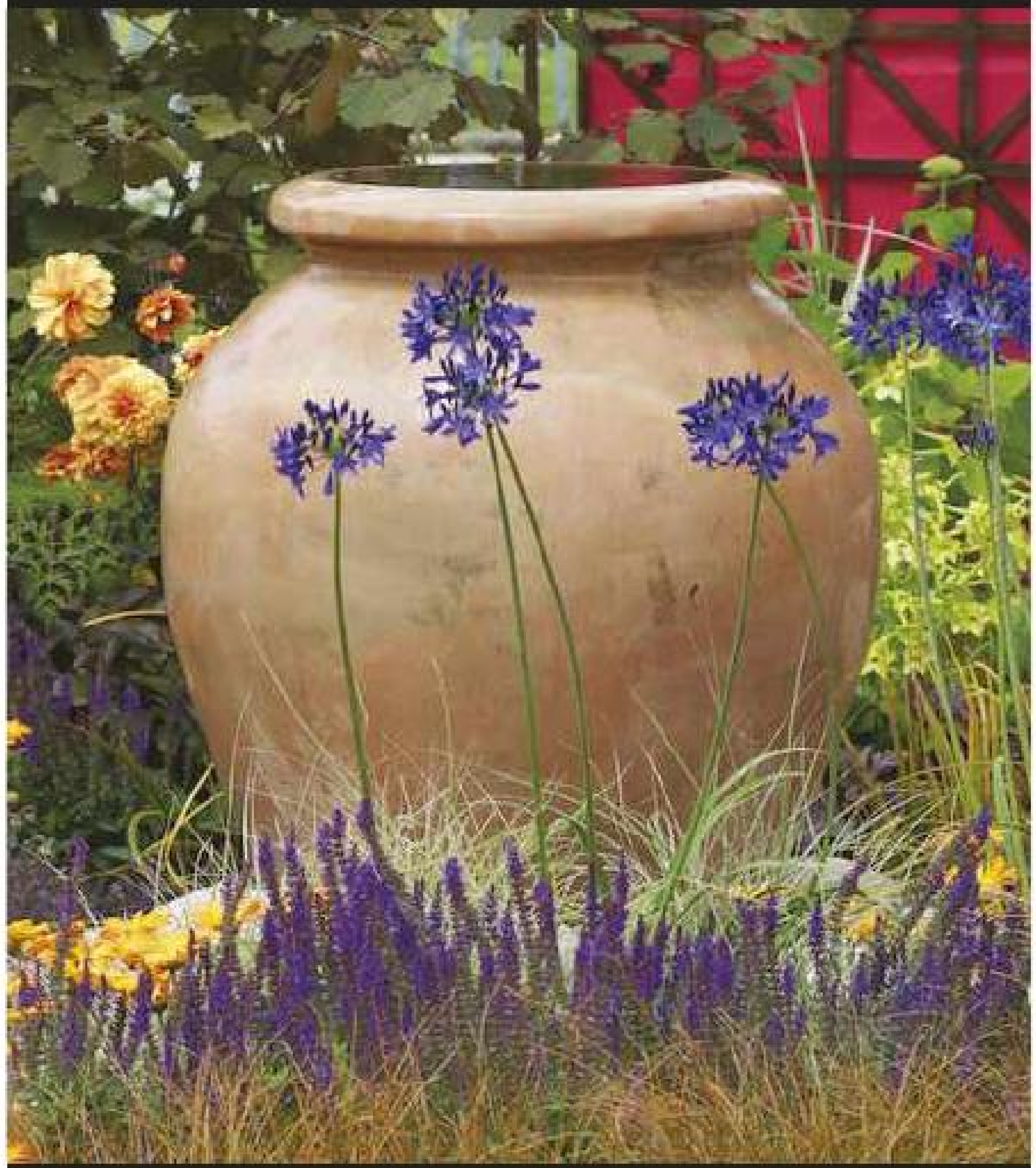
Sow hardy annuals such as calendula and trapaeolum into the ground.

Increase watering and start feeding houseplants.

Make regular evening trips around the garden, collecting slugs.

Lift and divide perennial herbs such as chives and mint in order to make more plants.

ITALIAN TERRACE



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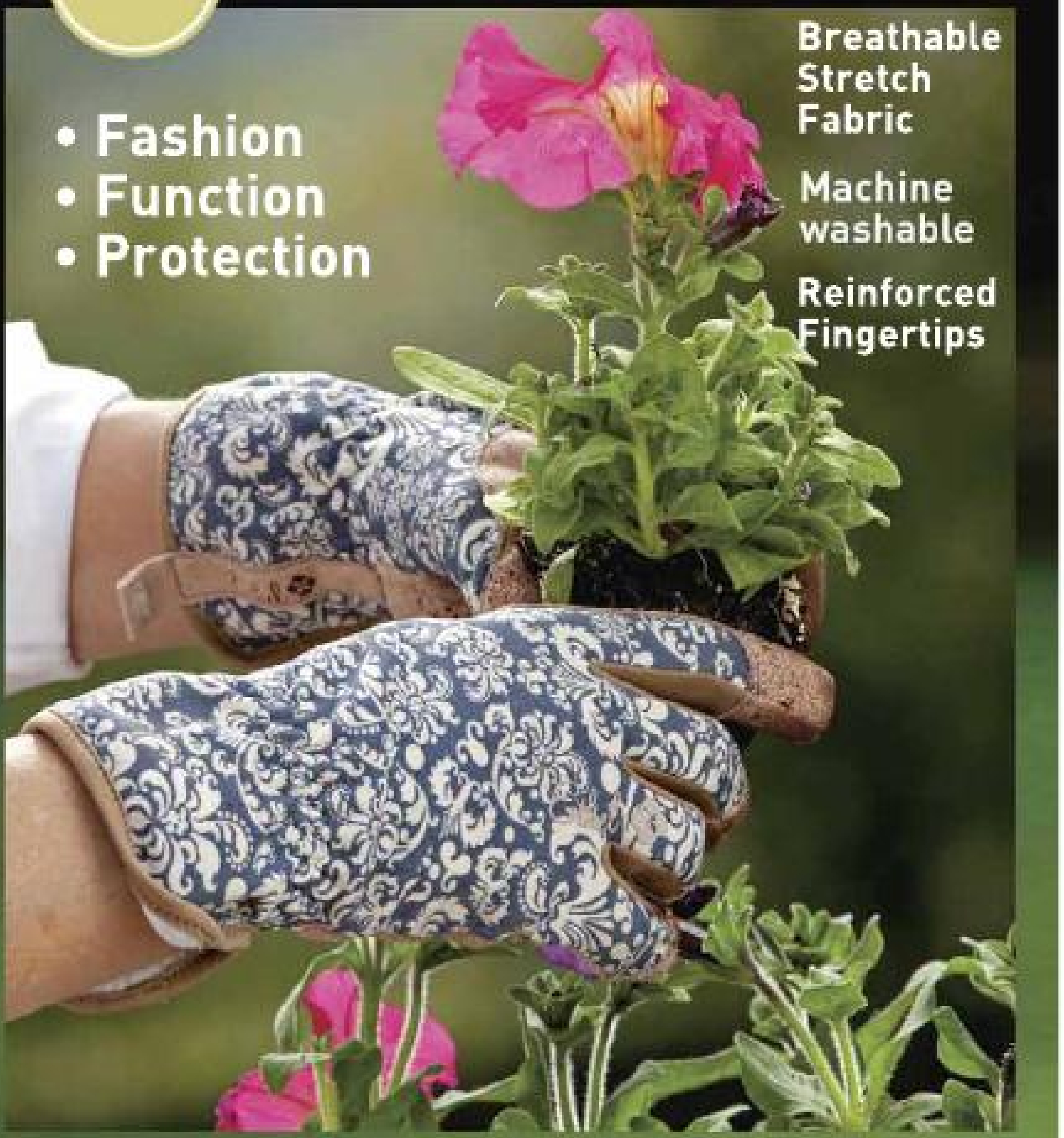

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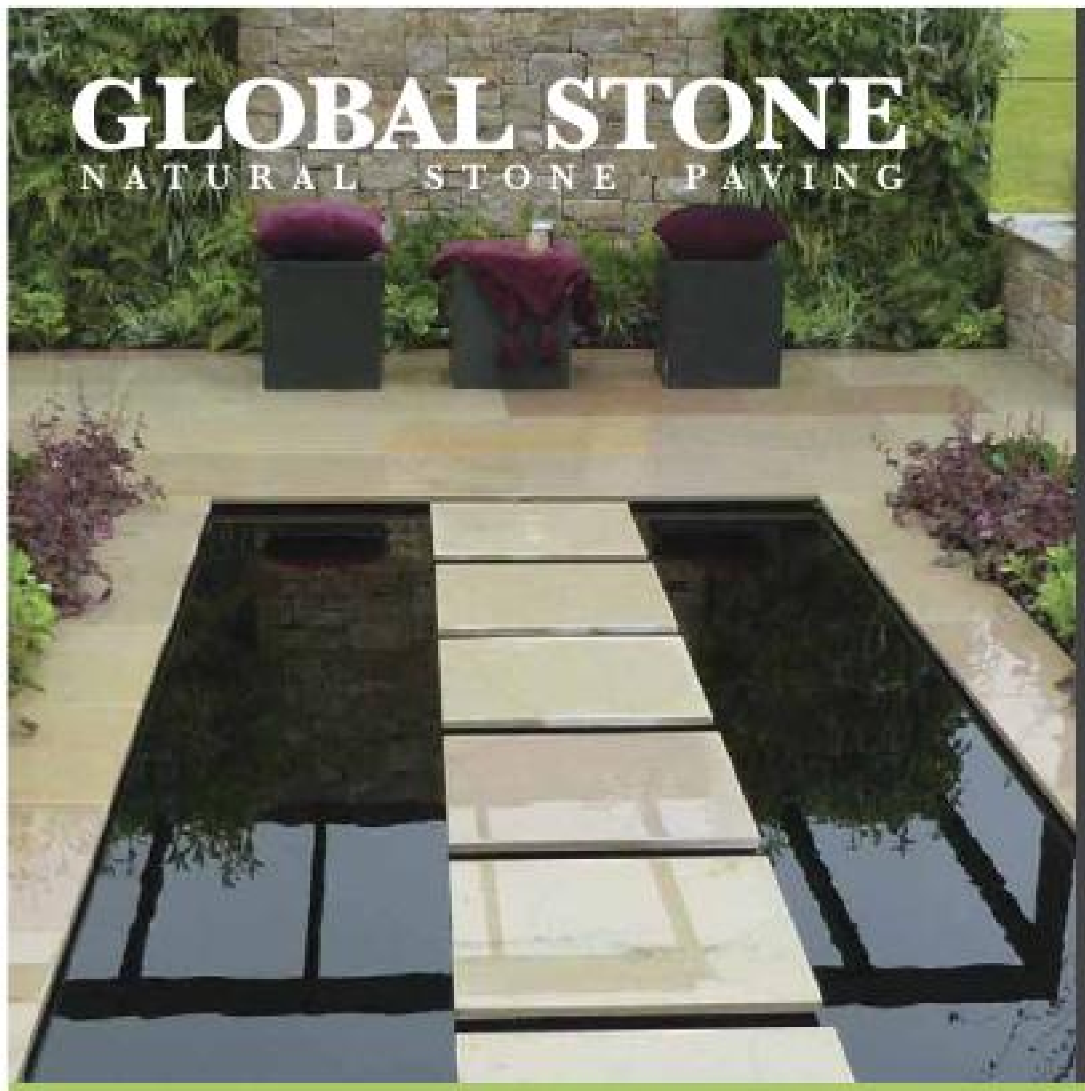

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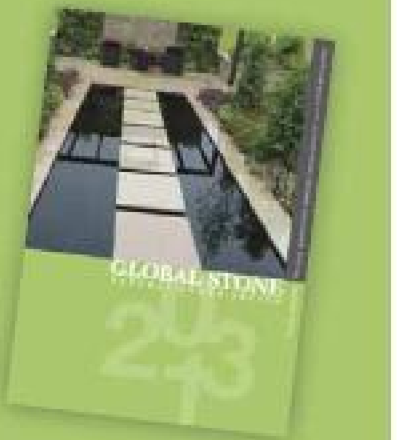

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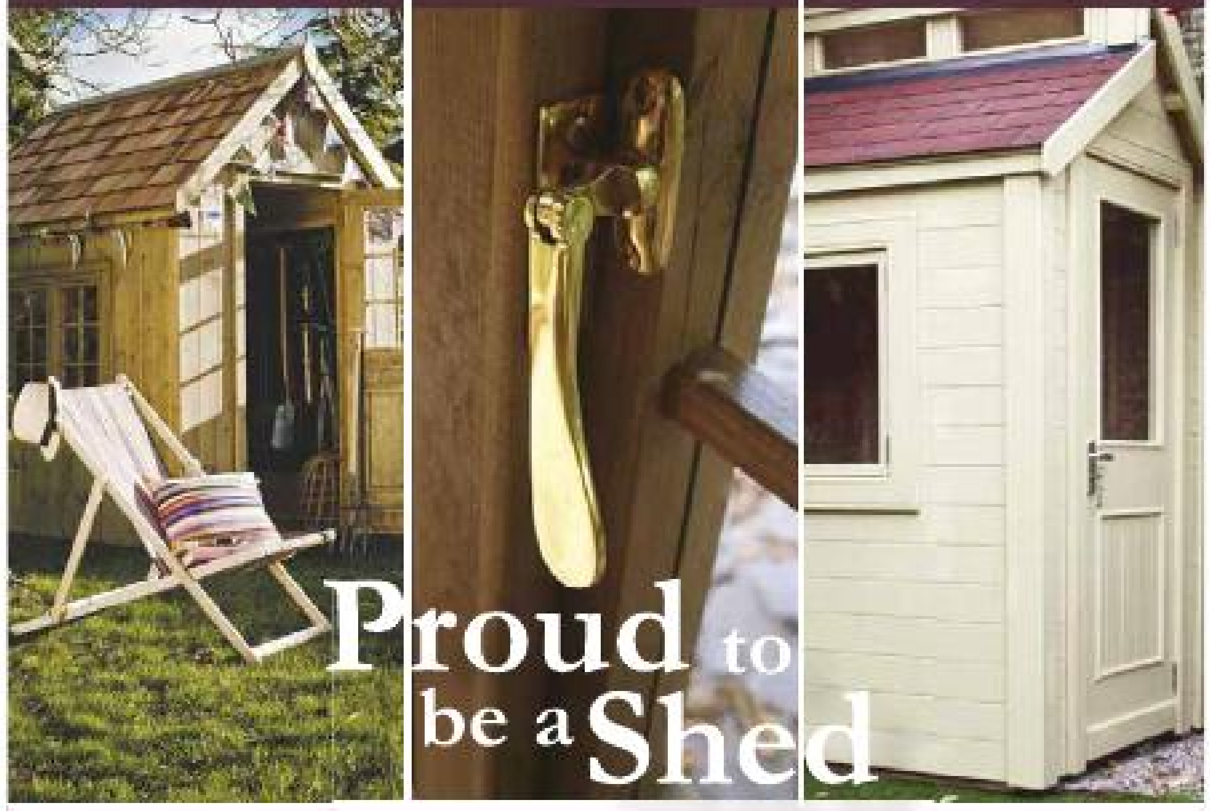

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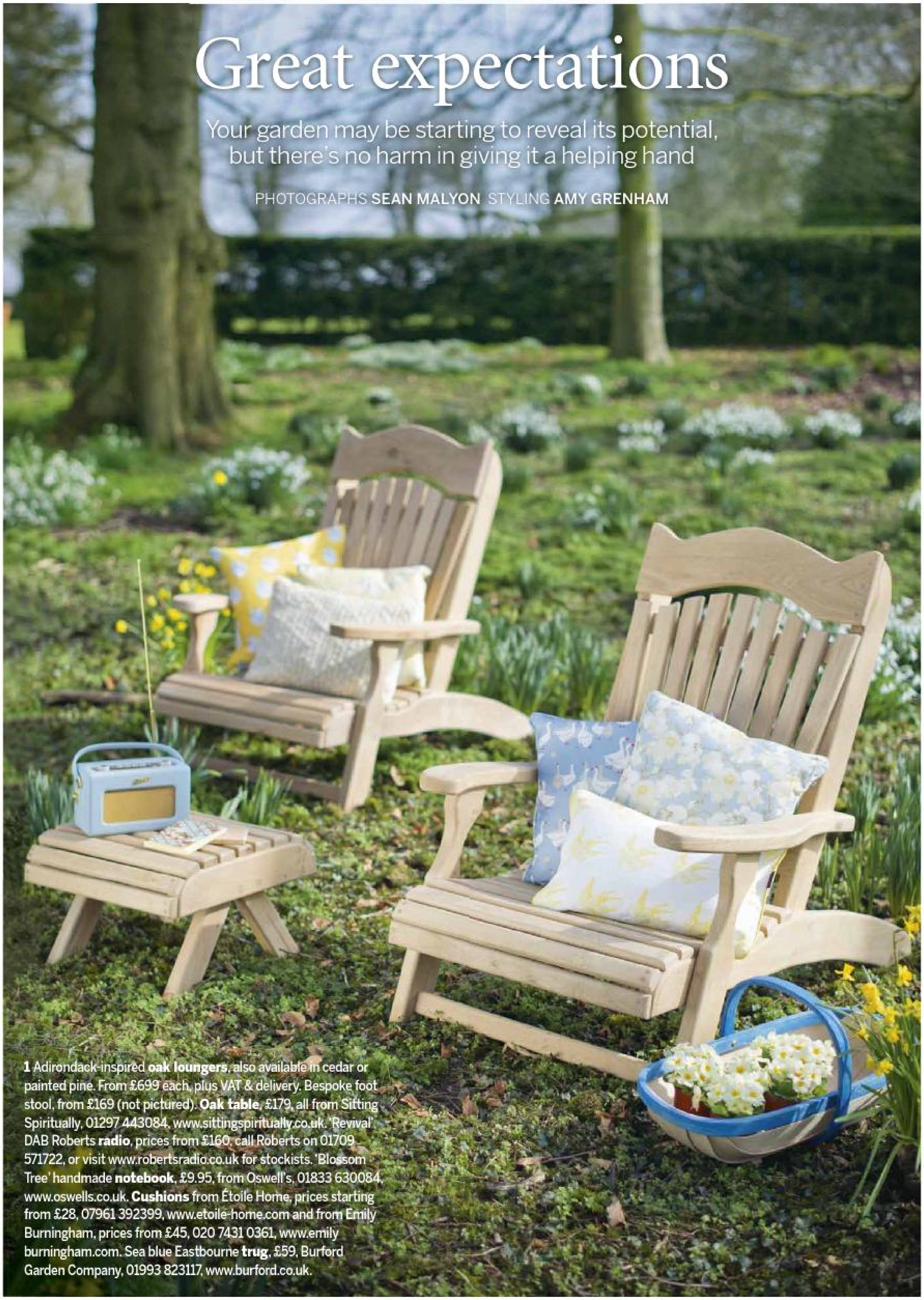
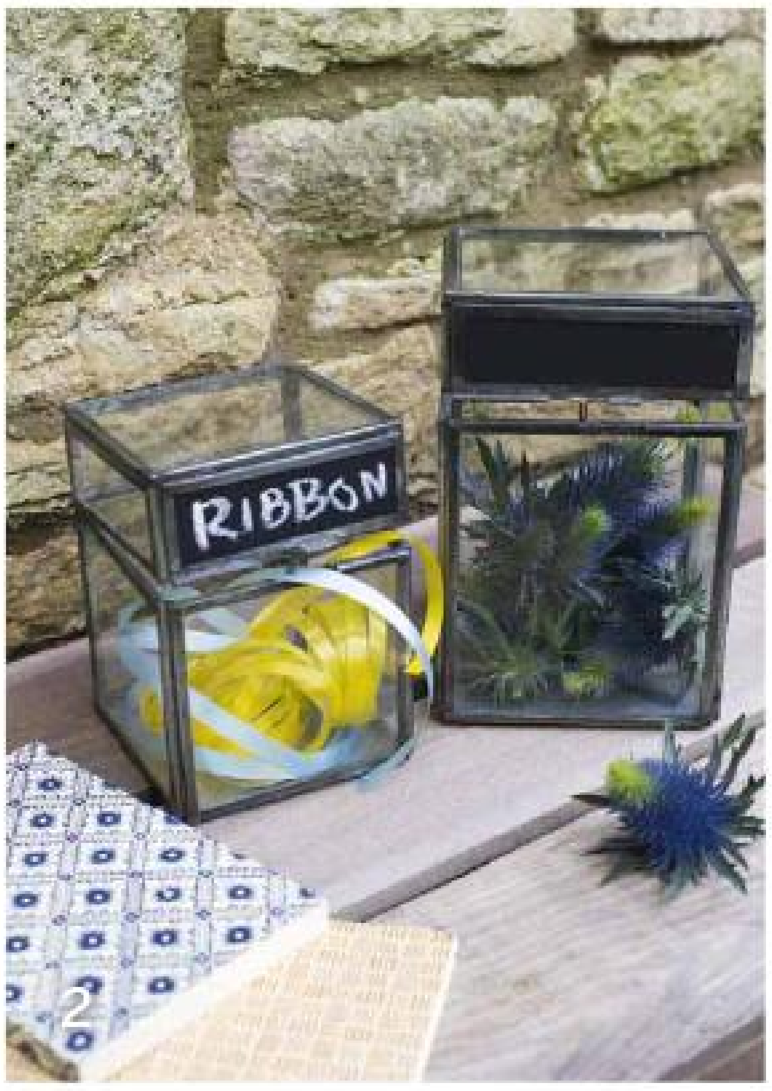


Great expectations

Your garden may be starting to reveal its potential, but there's no harm in giving it a helping hand

PHOTOGRAPHS **SEAN MALYON** STYLING **AMY GRENHAM**

1 Adirondack-inspired **oak loungers**, also available in cedar or painted pine. From £699 each, plus VAT & delivery. Bespoke foot stool, from £169 (not pictured). **Oak table**, £179, all from Sitting Spiritually, 01297 443084, www.sittingspiritually.co.uk. 'Revival' DAB Roberts **radio**, prices from £160, call Roberts on 01709 571722, or visit www.robertsradio.co.uk for stockists. 'Blossom Tree' handmade **notebook**, £9.95, from Oswell's, 01833 630084, www.oswells.co.uk. **Cushions** from Étoile Home, prices starting from £28, 07961 392399, www.etoile-home.com and from Emily Burningham, prices from £45, 020 7431 0361, www.emilyburningham.com. Sea blue Eastbourne **trug**, £59, Burford Garden Company, 01993 823117, www.burford.co.uk.



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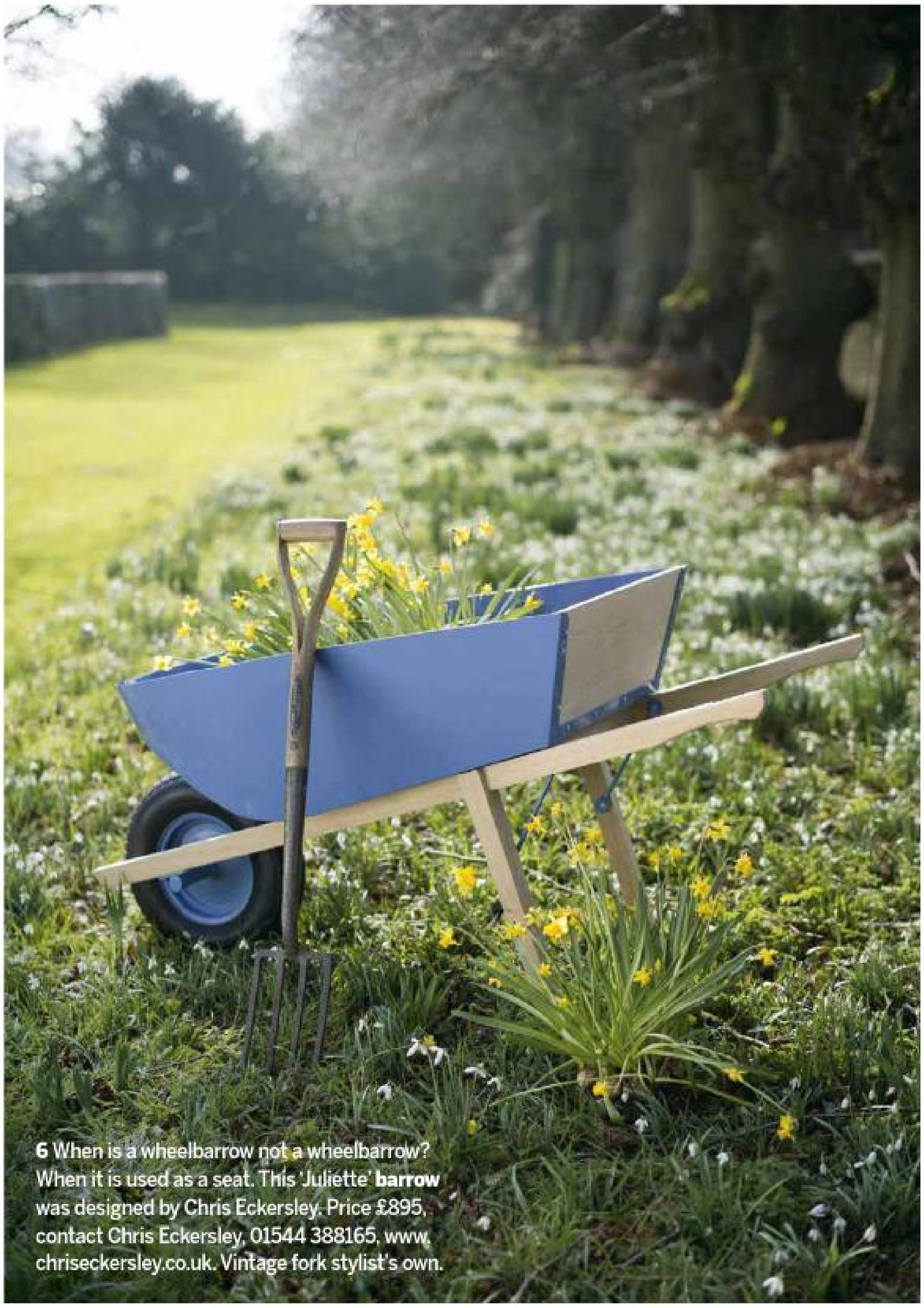
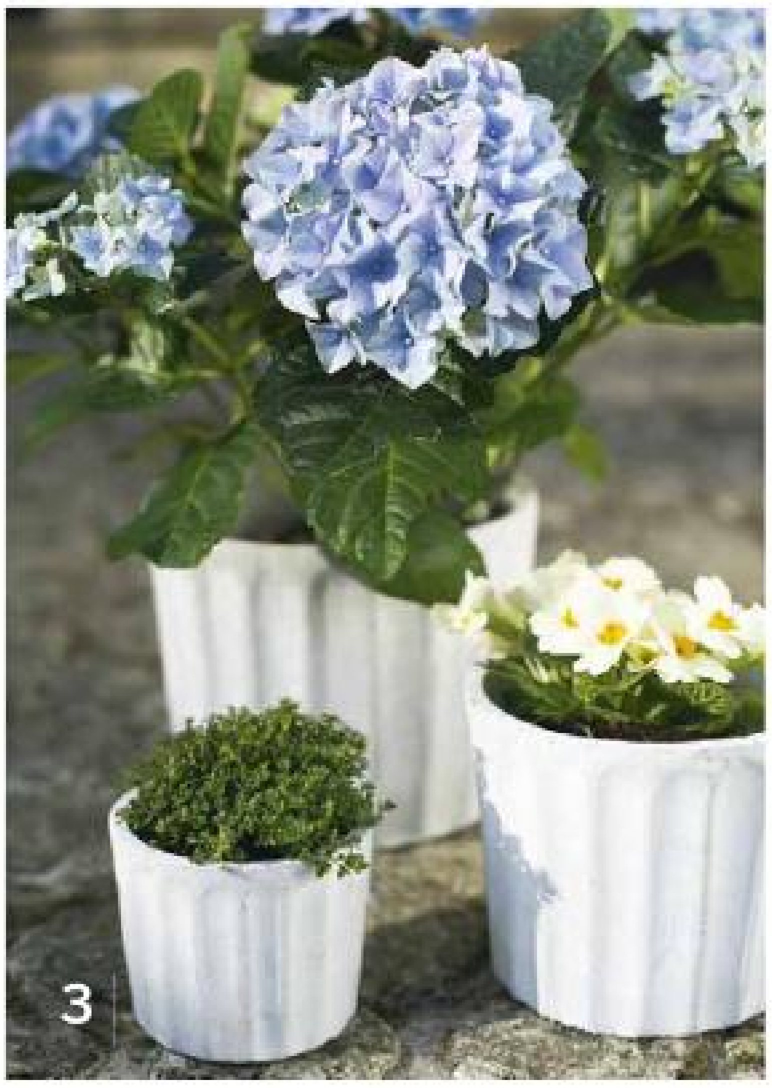


6 When is a wheelbarrow not a wheelbarrow? When it is used as a seat. This 'Juliette' **barrow** was designed by Chris Eckersley. Price £895, contact Chris Eckersley, 01544 388165, www.chriseckersley.co.uk. Vintage fork stylist's own.



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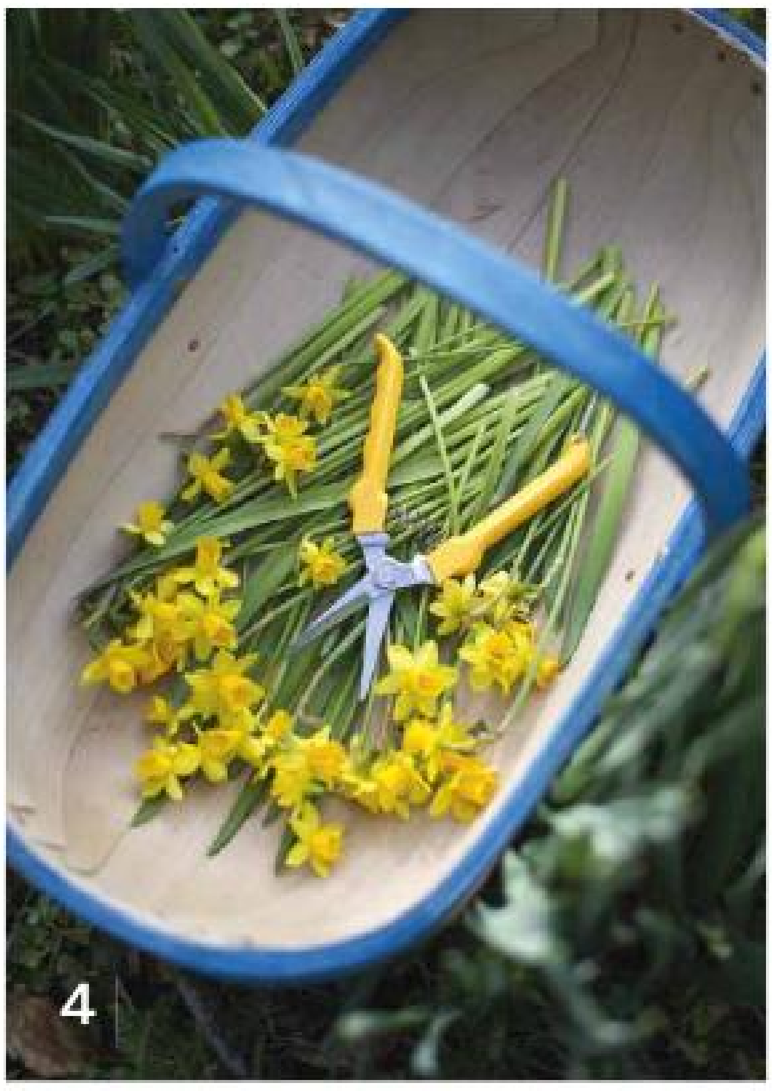

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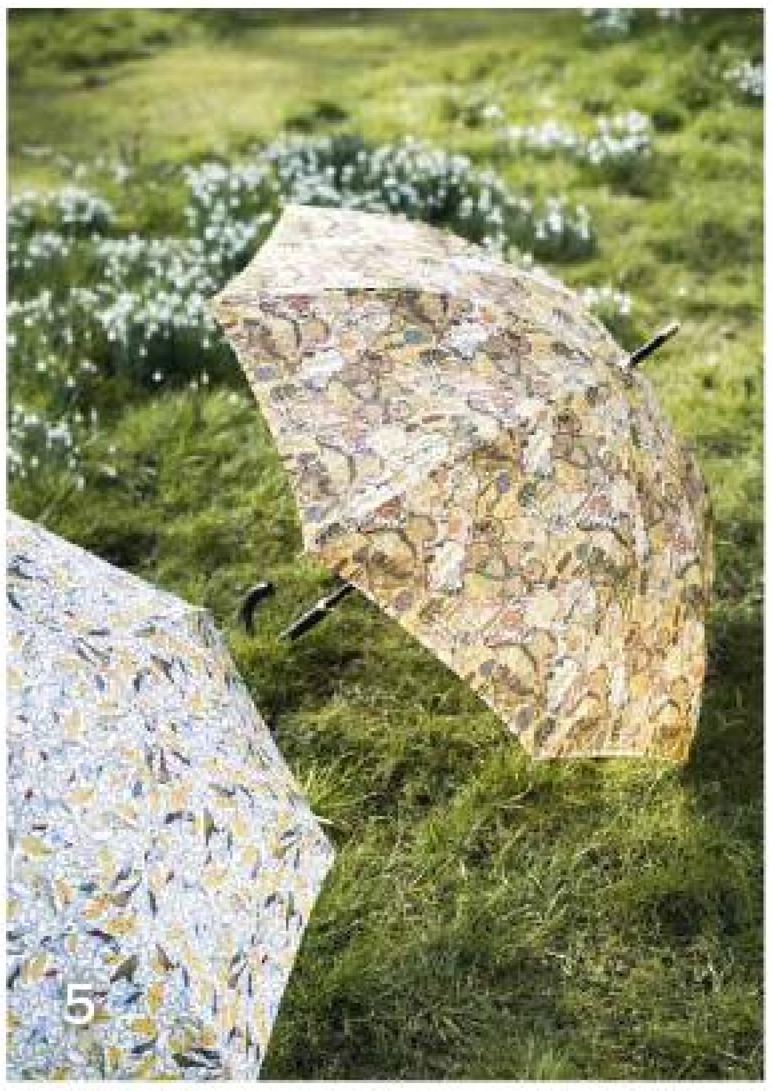

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2 Spring cleaning the shed? These metal-edged **glass boxes** with chalkboard panels are a great way to gather up and label your gardening paraphernalia. Available in large, £24 and small £18.50, from Cox & Cox, 0844 858 0744, www.coxandcox.co.uk. Handmade **notebooks** from Oswell's, as before.

3 Raw clay concrete **planters**, perfect for indoor or outdoor use. £29.95 for a set of three from The Balcony Gardener, 0207 431 5553, www.thebalconygardener.com

4 Bring a little spring inside with some cut flowers from the garden. These steel 'Genzo' **snips** are great for general gardening, £24 from Niwaki, 0845 4741041, www.niwaki.com. Sea blue Eastbourne **trug** from Burford Garden Company, as before.

5 Dodge the April showers with this traditional **'Landscape' umbrella**, £25, or **'Birds' umbrella**, £16, from Victoria & Albert Museum Shop, 020 7942 2696, www.vandashop.com

Shot on location at Tormarton Court, South Gloucestershire, with kind permission.

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A voyage around the Azores archipelago aboard the MS Island Sky

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The Itinerary

Day 1 - London to Ponta Delgada, Sao Miguel. Fly by scheduled flight via Lisbon and, upon arrival, transfer to the MS Island Sky for embarkation.

Day 2 - Sao Miguel. Today we will explore the Furnas Valley, an enormous valley and luxuriant garden in the east of the Island. This is an area of diverse volcanic activity and we will see the famous lake, surrounded by the calderas and boiling sulphur pools. After a visit to the village of Furnas and the botanical gardens we return to the ship and set sail.

Day 3 - Terceira. This morning explore Angra do Heroismo, a charming UNESCO heritage town with a distinct Mediterranean flavour. Enjoy a walking tour that takes in the Misericorda church, Convent do Sao Francisco, public gardens and museum. In the afternoon there will be free time to hike to Monte Brasil to see the fortification and view, or relax and wander the historic town.

Day 4 - Flores & Corvo. Named after its abundant flora, Flores is often regarded as the prettiest of the Azores. A rugged terrain island with flowers growing in the deep canyons and waterfalls casting hues of blues and green as they splash down to the sea. Visit the vertical basalt cliffs of Rocha do Bordoes, formed by the cooling of lava. See a stunning array of natural features including calderas, fajas, rivers, waterfalls and valleys. This afternoon, conditions permitting, visit the tiny island of Corvo, comprised of one large caldeira.

Day 5 - Faial. Our day begins with an exploration of fairly recent volcanic activity at Ponta dos Capelinhos. See how a 1957-1958 volcanic eruption transformed the area and created a new land mass. This afternoon we enjoy a walking tour of Horta or a whale watching cruise.

Day 6 - Pico. Explore distinctive Pico, home to Portugal's highest peak and numerous black lava flows. The UNESCO-designated Lajido Acros tells the story of early winemakers and we will learn about whaling life in the Azores at the Museum of Lajes.

Day 7 - Sao Jorge. This largely rural island has many more cattle than people and is known for its strong cheddar-like cheese. It is of geographical interest with its cliff shoreline marked with flat fajas sweeping to the sea. After visiting the charming old world harbour town of Velas and a cheese factory, the ship cruises the coastline to find a tranquil faja where, weather permitting, we hope to make a Zodiac landing.

Day 8 - Graciosa. Known as the "White island", Graciosa has a gentle rolling landcape, dotted with windmills and traditional whitewashed houses. Visit Furna do Enxofre ('Cave of Sulphur'), a geologically unique phenomenon and one of the original examples of the volcanic Azores, and take the winding stairway down to the magnificent volcanic cavern and lake.

Days 9 to 11 - At sea. Enjoy three days at sea. Keep a lookout for birdlife, whales and dolphins. Attend some lectures or just relax on deck.

Days 12 - Tresco, UK. This morning we will moor off Tresco. There will be a tour of the gardens and some free time to explore at leisure.

Day 13 - Poole. Disembark after breakfast and transfer to Poole train station.

MS Island Sky

The MS Island Sky is one of the finest small ships in the world. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 114, the all-suite vessel has the benefit of unusually large accommodation, public areas and spacious outside decks. All suites feature a sitting room area and some have a private balcony. The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a lounge, elegant bar, library and a single seating dining room. Outside there is a rear sun deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade, a bar and comfortable deck furniture. On the top deck there is a Jacuzzi, further observation and sun deck.

Prices & Inclusions

Special offer prices per person based on double occupancy start from £3995 for a standard forward suite to £6495 for an owner's balcony suite. Suites for sole use from £6095.

Price Includes: Economy scheduled air travel from London to Ponta Delgada, 12 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis with house wine, beer or soft drinks with lunch and dinner onboard, onboard team and lecture programme, shore excursions, gratuities to crew and whilst on shore excursions, transfers, port taxes, airport taxes. *NB Travel insurance is not included in the price. Ports subject to change. All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.*

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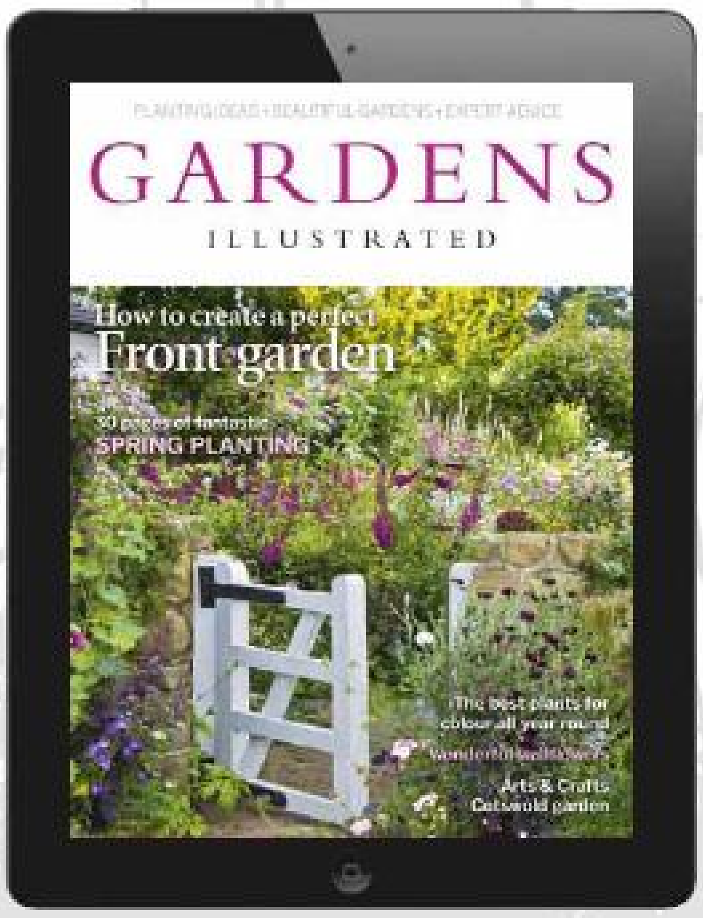

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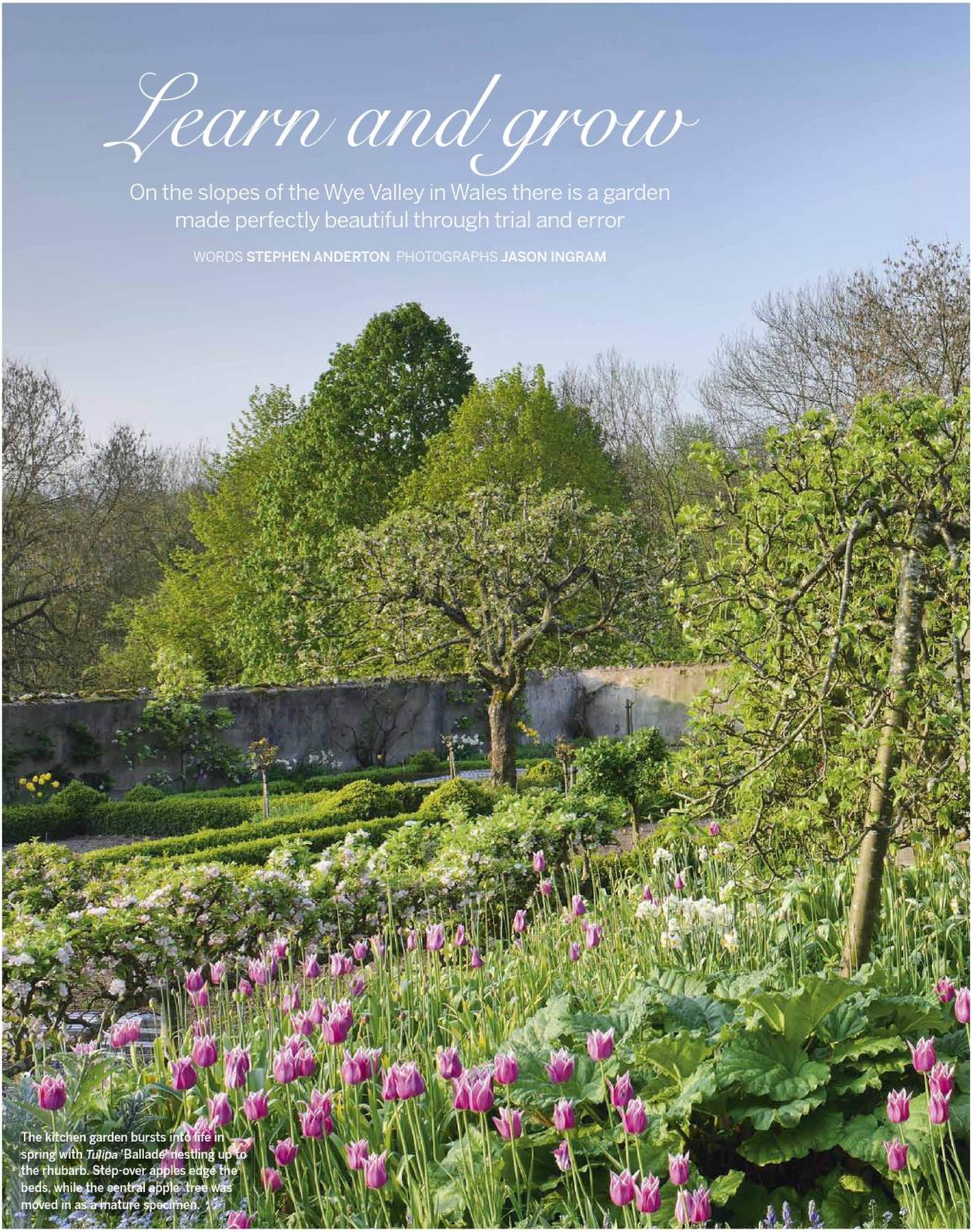
Learn and grow

On the slopes of the Wye Valley in Wales there is a garden made perfectly beautiful through trial and error

WORDS **STEPHEN ANDERTON** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**



The kitchen garden bursts into life in spring with *Tulipa* 'Ballade' nestling up to the rhubarb. Step-over apples edge the beds, while the central apple tree was moved in as a mature specimen.

In brief

Name Brilley Court.
What Late 20th-century garden around a 16th-century farmhouse.
Where Deep rural Herefordshire, near Hay-on-Wye.
Size Three acres, plus the seven-acre wooded valley.
Climate By British standards, warm summers, not too dry, and cold winters.
Soil Well-drained, fertile, red stony loam.
Points of interest Ornamental kitchen and cutting gardens plus a wooded valley of flowering trees and shrubs.

There is nothing so promising as a young avenue like the one that leads to Brilley Court. It runs through rolling farmland on the northern slopes of the Wye Valley in Herefordshire, looking south to the dark scarps of Wales' Black Mountains. In the pasture either side are clumps of young trees in the manner of a landscape park, but this is in fact a farm ('court' is the old Herefordshire word for a wealthy farm.)

A farmhouse appears, and working barns, and you can see the garden at last, with the timber-framed 16th-century core of Brilley Court at its centre.

Formerly a run-down farm, Rosanna Bulmer and her husband David have turned it into a charming and ambitious country garden. This is cider country and David is a member of the Bulmers cider family. Rosanna came here from Sussex aged only 26, but keen to make a garden. "There was no designer," she admits, "I'd rather make my own mistakes than pay others to make them for me." And so she made a start.

The house is L-shaped and some of the yard was already walled so she completed the square with a picket fence, turned the yard into an undulating lawn with a terrace tucked in to the house, and started planting borders. "You start with so many preconceptions," she remembers, "and they are all wrong. I wanted it to be green, grey and white and I was rigid about it at first, but sense prevailed and plants that suit the site came in. Welsh poppies, bluebells…" Today her great loves are delphiniums, oriental poppies, alliums, tulips and tree peonies.

Time passed and, hearing Lady Ross of Chirk Castle declaim that "One should never be afraid to move anything!", she took stock. Walls replaced the picket fence and the potager was moved outside the walls, its old grid of paths re-employed as an enclosed cutting garden. Greenhouses arrived.

Where its narrow grass paths crossed, the cutting garden was given a little gazebo covered in carefully trained whitebeam. *Sorbus aria* 'Lutescens' and two cork oaks flanked the gate, brought from Spain as acorns. The idea of standard honeysuckles came from Hatfield House and Rosanna's hero Lady Salisbury.

The new kitchen garden is also formal, with crossing paths and closely trained apples. There are herbs, low box hedges, a huge fig and, as a centrepiece, an imported mature apple which, when installed by a Bulmer, caused smiles. A lattice door has been made in the outer boundary to create a vista from the kitchen window right through the main garden, the cutting garden and kitchen garden, to the fields beyond.

In the mid-80s Rosanna took in an adjacent seven-acre, stream-centred valley that runs down one side of the garden. Here the chaos of vegetation was reduced to an open matrix of oaks, thorns, holly and field maples. Summerhouses were set up at top and bottom, with a bridge halfway down,

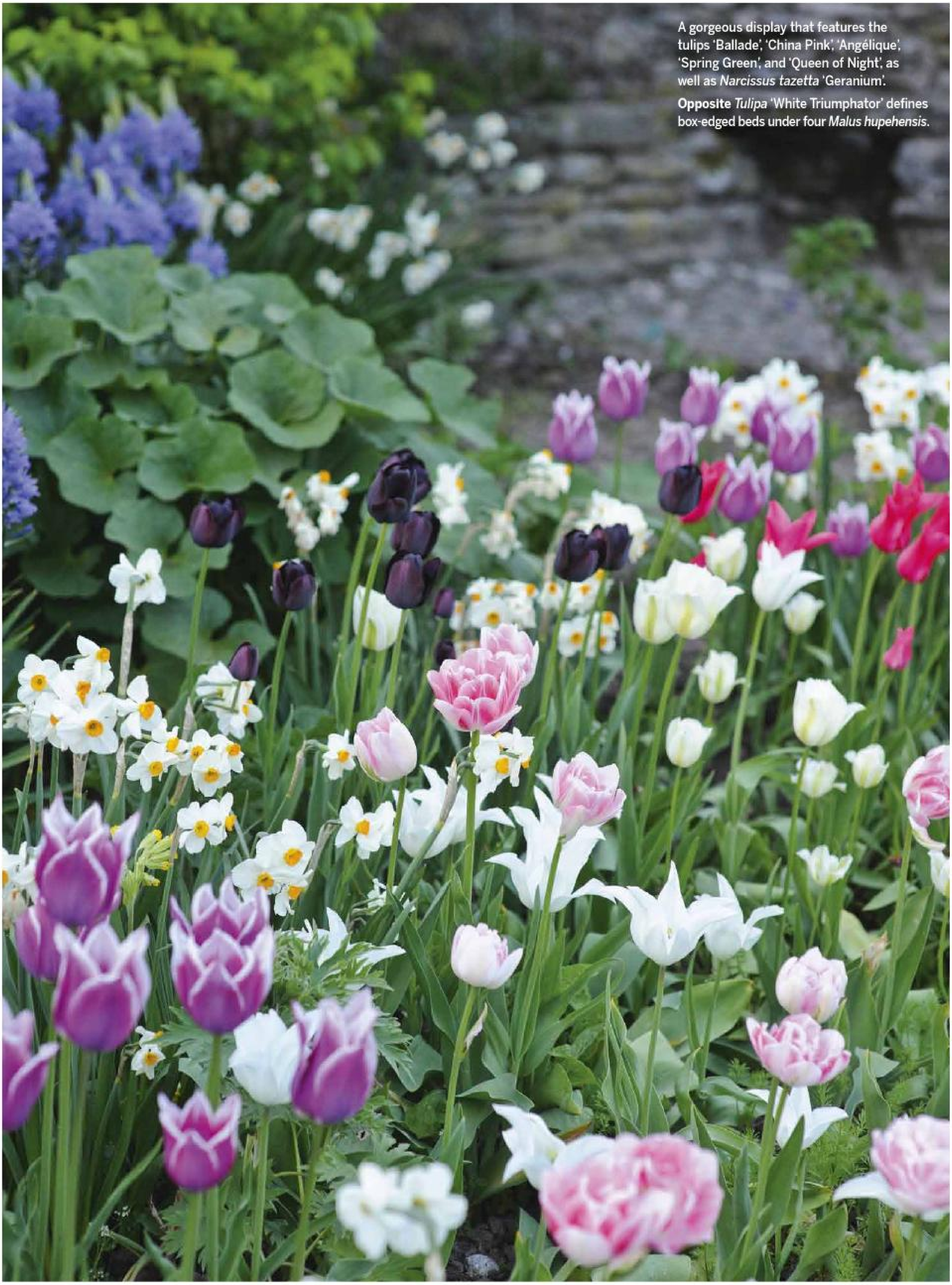
Continued on page 38 ▷

Top left The cutting garden is centred on a gazebo of carefully trained whitebeams, *Sorbus aria* 'Lutescens', surrounded by four standard honeysuckles.

Top right Box hedging is used to define the beds in the kitchen garden.

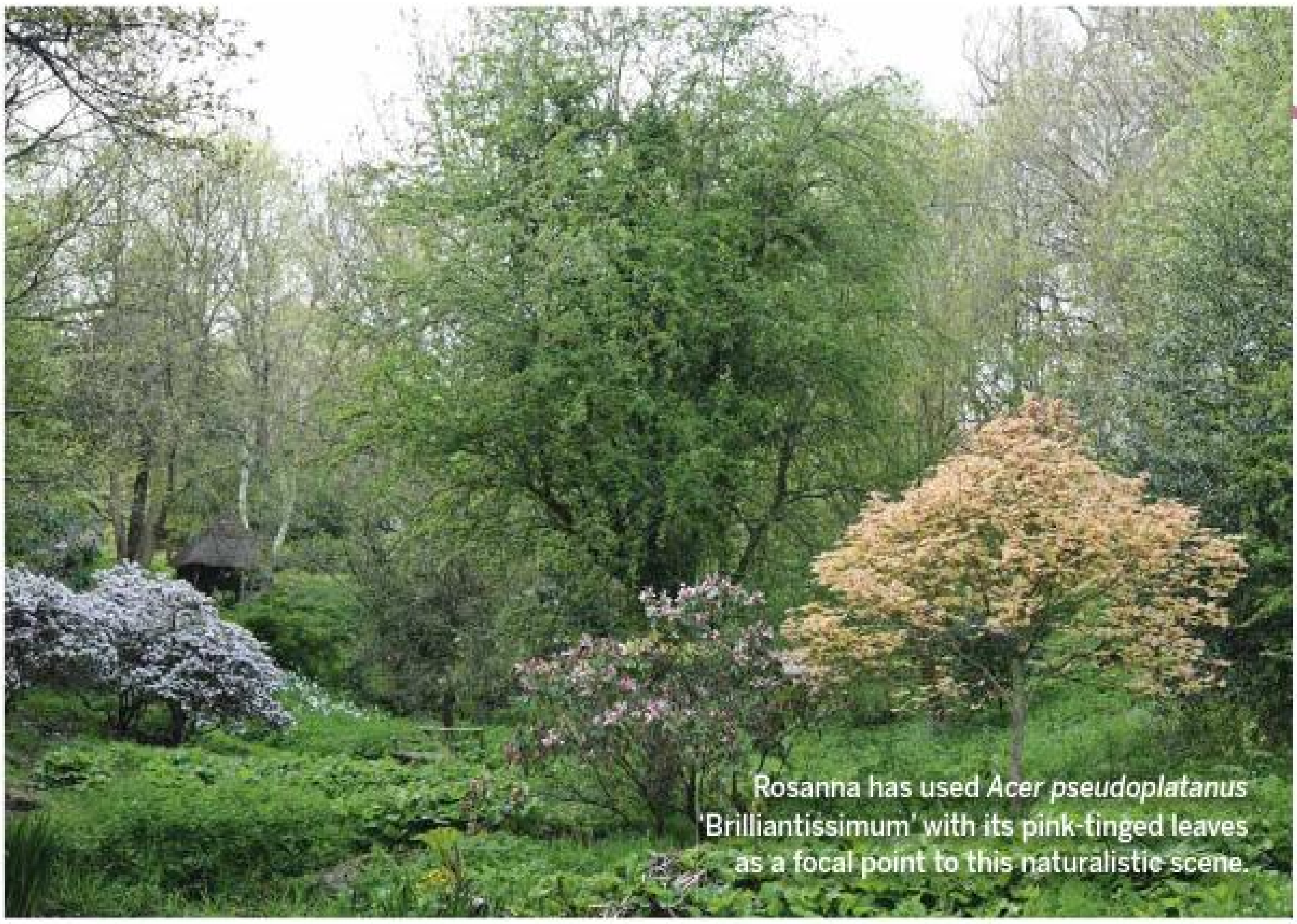
Bottom left An avenue of apple trees underplanted with narcissi forms the boundary between the house and woodland gardens.

Bottom right Blue *Camassia leichtlinii* subsp. *suksdorfii* thrive in the rich, red Herefordshire soil.



A gorgeous display that features the tulips 'Ballade', 'China Pink', 'Angélique', 'Spring Green', and 'Queen of Night', as well as *Narcissus tazetta* 'Geranium'.

Opposite *Tulipa* 'White Triumphator' defines box-edged beds under four *Malus hupehensis*.



Rosanna has used *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Brilliantissimum' with its pink-tinged leaves as a focal point to this naturalistic scene.

"Bluebells and stitchwort, campion, wood anemones – what could be better?"

▷ and circuit paths at high and low level. Then garden trees were added: *Metasequoia* and *Taxodium* by the stream; groups of *Magnolia* x *wieseneri*, snake-bark maples and paperbark maples. By the water there is *Gunnera manicata*, enormous in such shelter, and sheets of *Trachystemon orientalis*, ice blue in flower but more telling as a foliage plant for shade.

Rosanna loves her native ground flora: "Bluebells and stitchwort, campion, wood anemones – what could be better?" she asks. Perhaps a love of naturalistic gardening is a symptom of age? Certainly Rosanna feels that another time she would blur the lines of the garden around the house, make it softer, the borders not quite so distinct. Yet still the house garden has a meadowy look under the trees around its edges, with naturalised wild daffodils, snake's head fritillaries, cowslips and bluebells. But they are there because they are loved, not to follow the fashion. The result is a comfortable, lived-in garden. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Brilley Court, Whitney-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR3 6JF.
Contact Rosanna Bulmer.
Tel 01497 831467.
Email rosebulmer@hotmail.com
Open Sunday 28 April from 1.30-6pm. Admission £4 adults, children free. Groups welcome by appointment.

Rosanna's recommendations for combining tulips

Plant them close enough to make a bold effect. Too widely spaced they become pointless.

Try the lily-flowered varieties if you want the most graceful heads.

Personally, I never lift tulips to store them – they usually survive in the ground. 'Queen of Night' and 'West Point' both thrive from year to year.

Black tulips such as 'Queen of Night' and 'Jan Reus' mix excellently with forget-me-nots.

Tulips look good dotted between the paving cracks of an informal terrace.

9 of Rosanna Bulmer's favourite spring plants

1 *Camassia leichtlinii* subsp. *suksdorfii* Caerulea Group
A thrilling electric blue, and as happy in rough grass as in a border. It bulks up easily into strong clumps. RHS H3-H4, USDA 5a-9b†.

2 *Buxus sempervirens*
Low box hedges make the perfect foil for tulips, hiding the bulbs' bare bases and providing substance. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 6a-8b.

3 *Narcissus poeticus*
One of the last narcissi to flower, the pheasant eye has only a very short trumpet but what a glorious perfume. USDA 4a-11.

4 Auriculas
Garden auriculas are easy to grow in pots and are one of the season's earliest sophisticated flowers.

5 *Meconopsis cambrica*
Seeds itself around a garden, providing an endless supply of cheerful golden flowers. RHS H4, USDA 3a-11.

6 *Polygonatum* x *hybridum*
An elegant perennial for cool, woodland soils and light shade, it builds up into dense colonies. Beware its sawflies. AGM. RHS H4.

7 *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Brilliantissimum'
Striking for its shrimp pink foliage, this needs a woodland position where its later-season drabness is not conspicuous. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

8 Bluebells
There's nothing to beat the hanging heads of English bluebells when naturalised in woodland.

9 *Rhododendron* 'Loderi Venus'
If only more rhododendrons had perfume. This is one of the best, with long scented trumpets, like a regale lily on stilts. AGM. RHS H4.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

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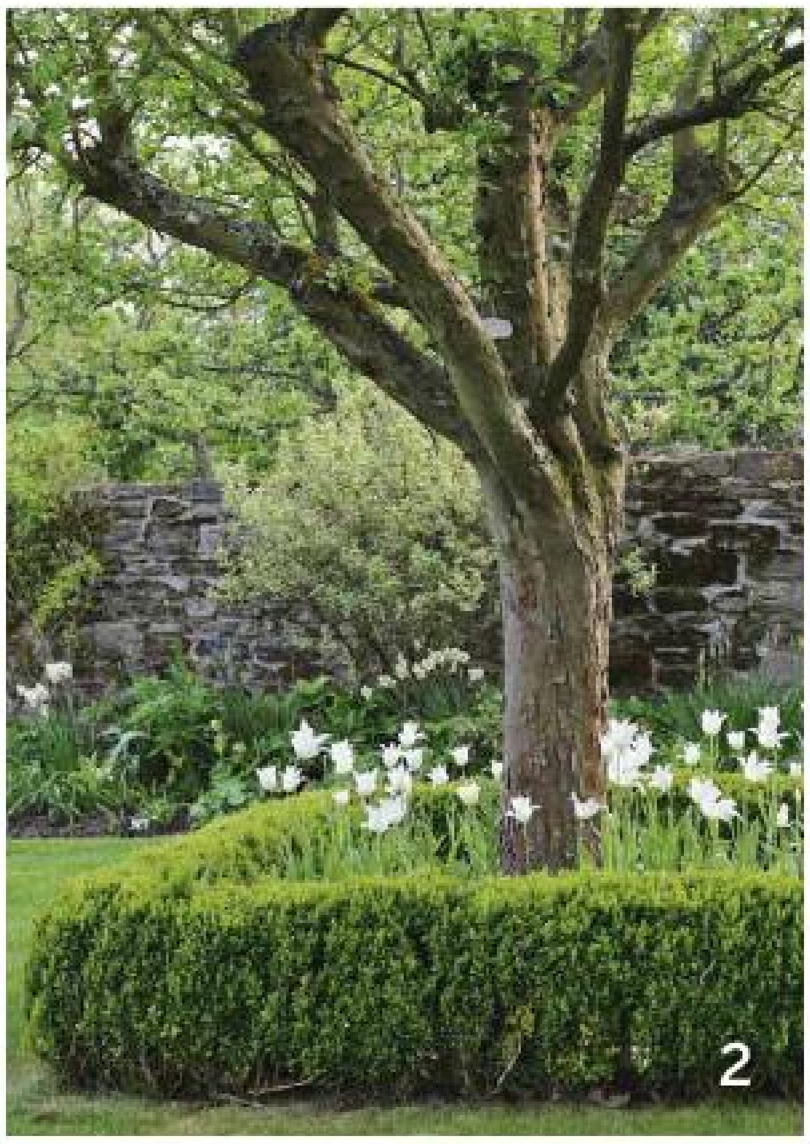
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Daphne adds to her tulip collection every year, taking note of any bare patches of soil that can be planted with bulbs in autumn.

In brief

Name Vale End.

What Private garden cared for by the Foulshams for nearly half a century.

Where Surrey.

Size One acre.

Climate Temperate.

Soil Bagshot sand, free draining and hungry, but heavily mulched annually for the last 15 years.

Points of interest Mixed country garden with many different areas and levels.

Late bloomers

It took Daphne and John Foulsham a little while to take an interest in their garden, but they are making up for lost time

WORDS **JODIE JONES** PHOTOGRAPHS **ABIGAIL REX**

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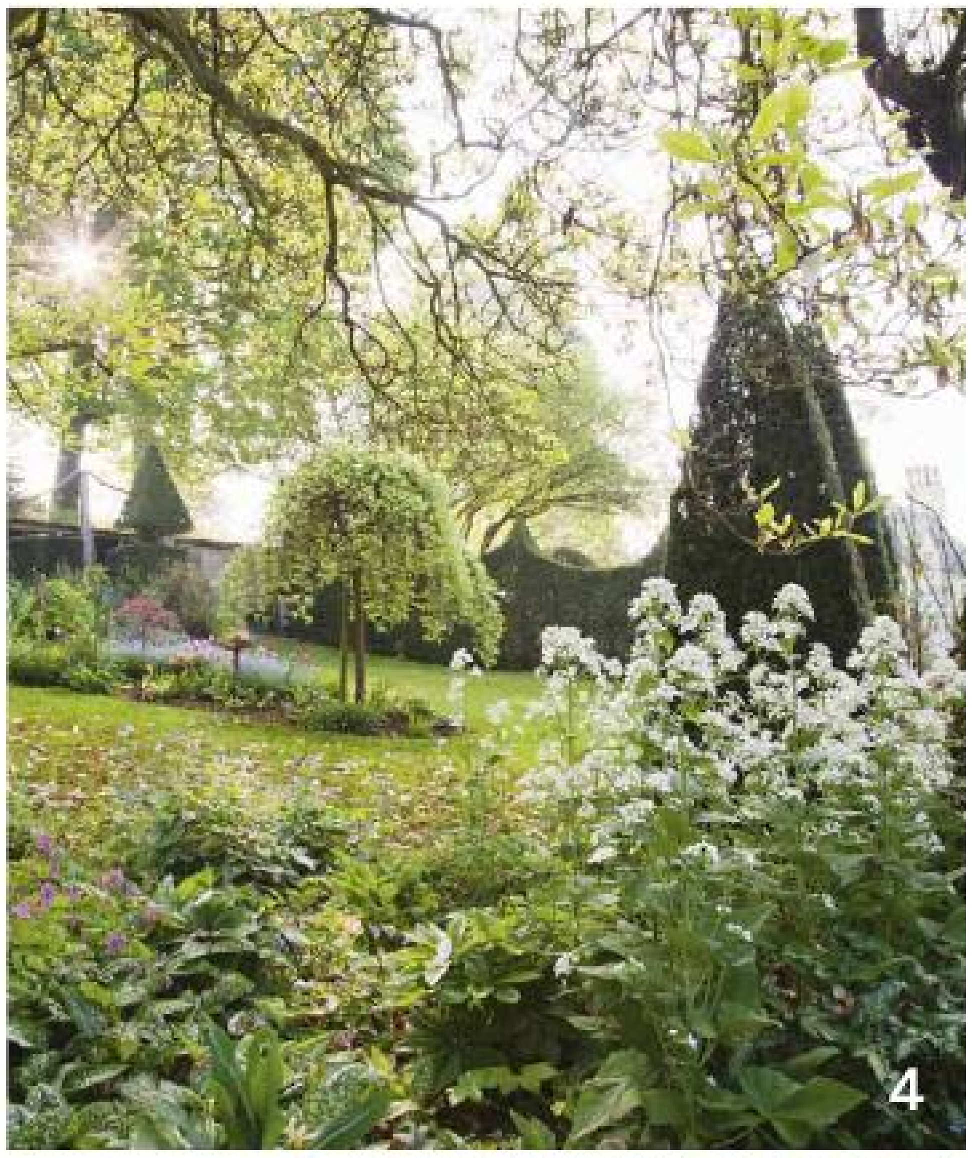

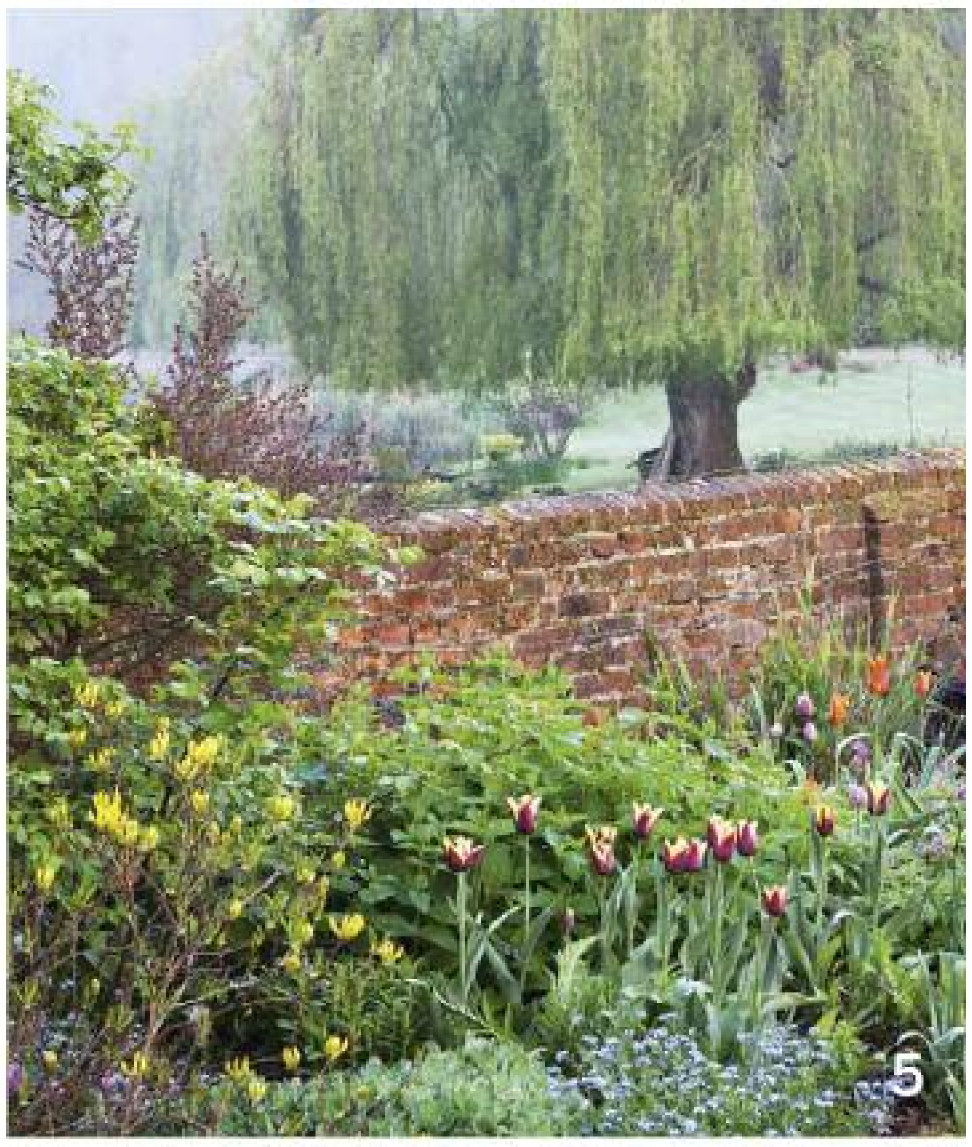

1 Unusually sited close to the front garden gate, the greenhouse makes an attractive focal point from the house.

2 Daphne and John have made a virtue of their sloping site by creating different areas on different levels.

3 The pretty folding metal bench, an impulse purchase by John, lends a romantic air to the lower lawn.

4 Daphne loves the uncomplicated simplicity of white honesty.

5 The colourful flower beds contrast with the cool green of a weeping willow in the meadow beyond the garden wall.

6 The herb and vegetable gardens were made from scratch, on a high terrace above the house.

It was a love of sailing that brought Daphne and John Foulsham to land-locked Surrey 47 years ago. "We lived in London but John kept a boat on the Beaulieu river so it was natural to look around here when we decided to move out," says Daphne.

"At that stage the garden wasn't a concern at all. We both came from families with lovely gardens so we knew how much time they took up and we were determined not to get caught like that!"

Only when John, an architect by profession, began working for extended periods overseas did they reluctantly sell their boat, and Daphne found herself with time to take an interest in their garden.

"I clearly remember the first plant that caught my imagination. It was an *Alchemilla mollis* and I just completely fell for it. And I still have my very first rose growing in with a wisteria, which makes for a lovely progression."

These days, continuing interest from one season to the next is a passion for Daphne. "Gradually, as your knowledge and interest expand, you find yourself extending the seasons until they almost join up." But spring, she feels, is a very special time. "Later there is so much going on everywhere you look, but in spring you can really enjoy each plant in its turn."

And of all the spring performers, tulips are a favourite. "I love tulips," says Daphne. "When I take pictures of the garden in spring, I will circle any bare patches I spot to remind myself where to put more tulips in autumn."

Because she gardens on very light soil, Daphne plants her tulips 15cm deep and simply leaves them until they start to diminish over the years. "I've some red cottage tulips that have been in and slowly increasing for about 40 years! I love seeing the tulips flowering with all the fresh young foliage of the herbaceous and shrubby planting. They look wonderful combined with euphorbia, forget-me-nots, camassia, chinodoxa, muscari and Bowles' golden grass, which seeds everywhere."

There has never been a grand plan for the garden as a whole. In the early days, Daphne was inspired by the likes of Vita Sackville-West, Christopher Lloyd, Beth Chatto and Marjorie Fish. "But the layout has evolved gradually over the years. I used to buy plants I liked the look of, then work out where to put them later. Now I'm more discerning, but I can still be tempted."

The one-acre site meanders up a gentle slope, giving several changes of level that have been harnessed to create distinct areas. At the highest point behind the house lies the vegetable garden and a sunken herb garden, which are John's sole preserve. Everywhere there is a sense of order without constraint. Self-seeded poppies and foxgloves that pop up between the rows are welcomed, but anything deserving the label 'weed' gets short shrift.

From here, steps lead down past an unusual roof-tile cascade to the Rope Walk, where clipped yew and box create a formal edging which in spring is brightened by masses of the cheerful ▷

There is something quintessentially English about the borders at Vale End, and perhaps at no time is this more evident than during the months of spring.

▷ red tulips *T.* 'Apeldoorn' and *T.* 'Red Shine', followed in summer by a swathe of roses, trained in swags along an old hawser found many years ago by their son on an Isle of Wight beach.

There is an attractive greenhouse to one side of the front gate, with beaver-tailed glass panes carefully hand-cut by John, full of Daphne's seedlings, waiting a turn in the weather before they are planted out in the garden. The lower lawns are bordered by quintessentially English country garden beds crammed with mixed herbaceous planting, but directly in front of the house, where the sun really bakes the free-draining sandy loam, Daphne has recently created a gravel garden, with a view to gradually reducing maintenance requirements.

"We do love this garden, but there are many other things we want to do as well, so we can't spend all our time here. John is keen on butterfly conservation, I am a member of the local Wildflower Group and we are about seven years into a ten-year project to visit all the lighthouses around the English coast."

What she barely thinks to mention is that she is also the Vice President (and former Chair) of the National Gardens Scheme, and for 27 years has opened her garden through *The Yellow Book*.

"It's something I rather fell into, egged on by a friend the first time. But opening our garden has proved a huge pleasure and a discipline. If people are going to come and see your garden then you want to be sure it looks its best. And we must have raised thousands of pounds over the years. My daughter-in-law's parents visited from Japan last spring and because it was a fine day I laid a table in a corner under the apple tree, which was smothered in blossom. I think they thought they had come to paradise!" ◻

FURTHER INFORMATION

Address Vale End, Chilworth Road, Albury, Surrey GU5 9BE.
Tel 01483 202594.
Open For the NGS by appointment, April to September (www.ngs.org.uk).

9 of Daphne's favourite plants

1 *Osmunda regalis*
One of the joys of spring is seeing the fresh young fronds of the royal fern begin to unfurl. Although much of the garden is free draining, we do have moist areas where this will thrive. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 3a-10b†.

2 *Magnolia grandiflora*
My Magnolia grandiflora (a huge tree when we arrived 47 years ago) makes a massive contribution to the garden in spring. RHS H3-H4.

3 *Erysimum* 'Apricot Twist'
These come in a range of colours. I'm fond of this evergreen perennial, covered with sweet-scented orange flowers from early spring through to the start of the summer. RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

4 *Myosotis* varieties
Forget-me-nots are so attractive and very easy to grow. Some worry about them seeding, but in truth they are no trouble.

5 *Tulipa* 'Ballerina'
The lily-flowered tulips have an elegant shape – this is a soft orange with a delicious perfume on warm days. AGM. RHS H4.

6 *Lunaria annua* var. *albiflora*
White-flowered honesty is lovely in spring, and the papery seed heads are attractive later in the year. The common purple form is also good value. AGM. RHS H4.

7 *Tulipa* 'Fringed Elegance'
Tulips have such a wonderful variety of colour and form. *T.* 'Fringed Elegance' is classically simple, but with a fringed edge to each petal. AGM. USDA 3a-7b.

8 *Euphorbia amygdaloides* 'Purpurea'
I think euphorbias are tremendous and I have many different forms in the garden, including this rather unusual purple form. RHS H4, USDA 6a-9a.

9 *Tulipa* 'Carnaval de Nice'
Tends to flower slightly later than most tulips and I really look forward to those boldly striped blooms. USDA 3a-7b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

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2 PLANTOGRAPHY / ALAMY. 7 SHARON PEARSON

Front gardens guide

Different rules apply at the front of your house, as you work within a smaller space – with privacy to be protected and a path to be accommodated. Here are three designs to set you thinking

WORDS **ANN-MARIE POWELL** ILLUSTRATIONS **RICHARD LEE**

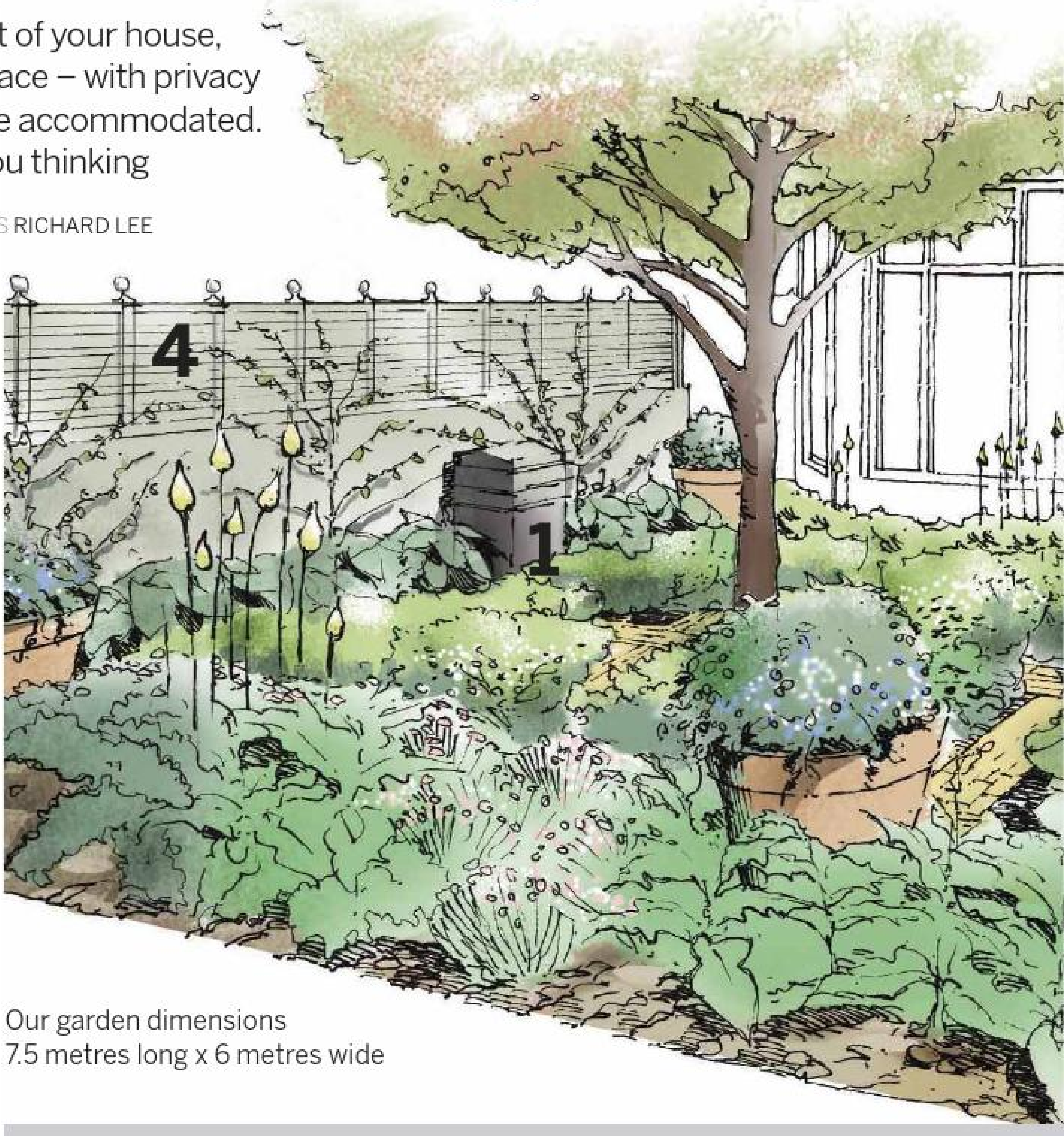
Ann-Marie Powell is an author, television presenter and award-winning garden designer. Her books include *Ann-Marie Powell's Plans for Small Gardens*.

Foraging garden

The last decade has seen an explosion of interest in the 'grow your own' movement, and like so many concerned about food provenance, I have dabbled with annual vegetables in the area of my garden known affectionately as the 'veg splodge'. However, traditional veg growing techniques require energy, time and effort; I (and many of my clients) have been looking for a way to grow food with less work.

Martin Crawford's book *How to Grow Perennial Vegetables* (Green Books) has inspired this perennial foraging front garden. I imagine it as a south-facing plot, on a good loamy well-prepared soil. A traditional space with unconventional plants to forage, a crab apple at the centre of a formal crisscross of brick paths stands proud above a host of perennial vegetables. Perennial food gardening may give less food per plant than conventional annual growing, but is a wonderful alternative to sowing from scratch every year. Placed in the front garden, crops are visible and easily accessible every time you return home.

What's more, growing perennials extends the harvest season without the need for a greenhouse, cold frame or other device. You can harvest Jerusalem artichokes all winter as long as you mulch enough to keep the ground from freezing, and some perennial crops, such as sorrel, are up and ready to eat in March when the snow is melting. Trained fruit is pretty, takes up little space, and doubles as a trellis over which to grow flowering climbers.



Our garden dimensions
7.5 metres long x 6 metres wide

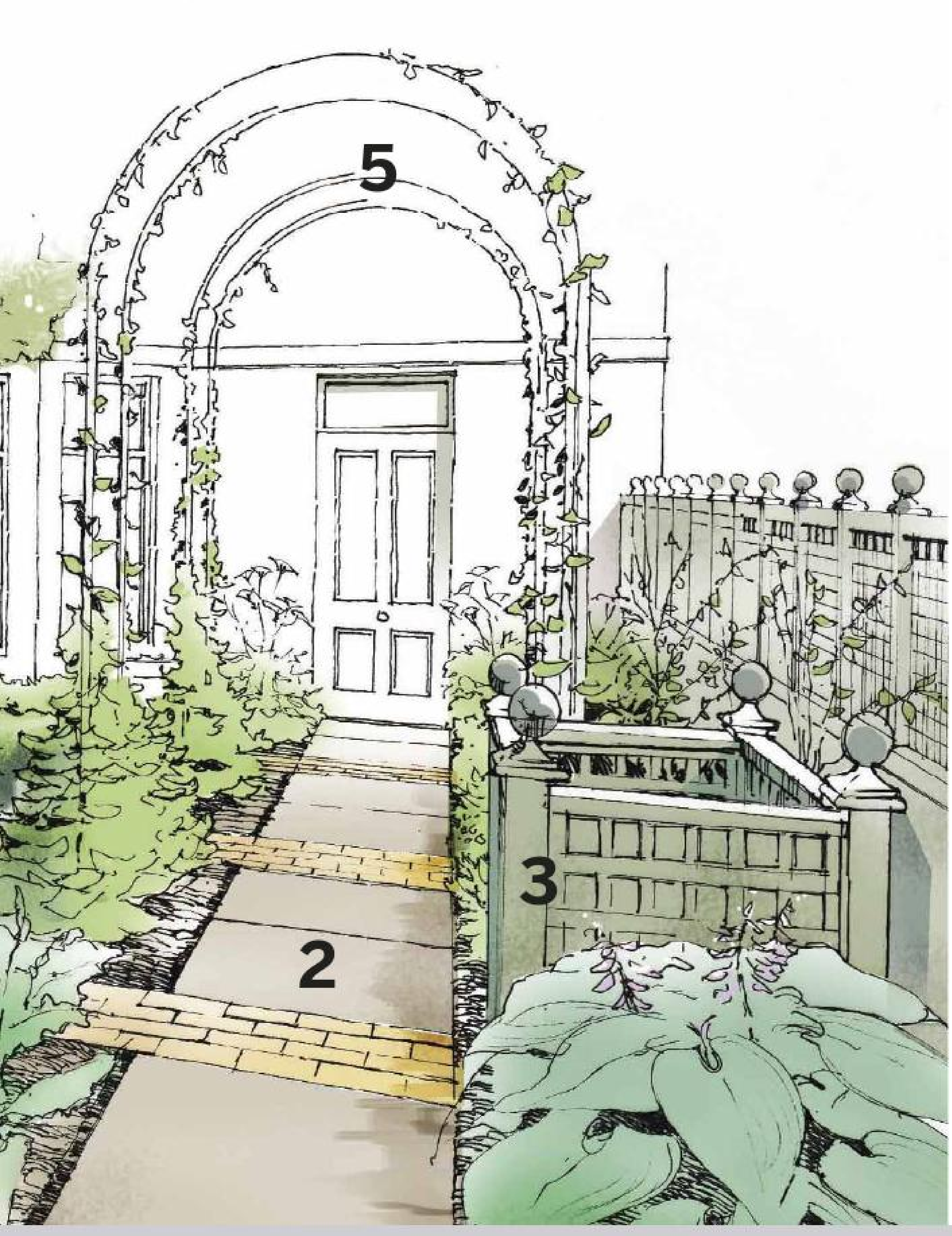
Key plants for a foraging garden

***Malus* 'Evereste'**
Crab apples are a choice tree for the small garden, and this variety has large flushed red-yellow-orange fruit that suits jellies, jams, pickle or vodka infusion. AGM*.

Malva moschata
This short-lived perennial sets seed freely. The blooms are irresistible to bees from July to September, and we can feast on the blooms, fruit, young leaves and shoots.

Crambe maritima
You'll find sea kale will crop for years. Young leaves can be used raw or steamed, while unopened flower heads taste like broccoli. The roots can be roasted or boiled. AGM.

PLANT PORTRAITS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: JONATHAN NEED / GAP PHOTOS; FLORAPIX / ALAMY; JO WHITWORTH / GAP PHOTOS; TOMMY TONSBERG / GAP PHOTOS; BLACKMOOR NURSERIES WWW.BLACKMOOR.CO.UK



1 Wormery

Wormeries are an efficient, space saving method of turning kitchen waste and small amounts of garden waste into nutrient-rich compost, and a fine source of concentrated liquid fertiliser. Suppliers include www.wormery.co.uk or www.wigglywigglers.co.uk

2 Hard landscaping

Brick paths and vegetable gardens have ever gone hand in hand, and narrow paths to walk through the garden provide access for cropping and maintenance. The main path is broken up with large stone slabs, lending a more contemporary air.

3 Bin store

A necessary evil in the front garden, using the same materials and colours of the boundary trellis helps to blend the store into the space. A hinged lid and door would give further camouflage.

4 Walls

Rendered walls radiate warmth, encouraging fruit to ripen. Trellis fixed atop adds height while allowing air to circulate around the wall-trained fruit. Try www.gardentrellis.co.uk

5 Arches

Arches over the path provide another growing opportunity and help frame the front door. Easily accessed, they could host hops *Humulus lupulus*, whose young shoots can be cropped and steamed like asparagus to retain the nutty flavour.

***Allium cepa* Proliferum Group**
This produces good harvests of food per square foot. All parts of the plant can be eaten raw or cooked, and the plant is up in February, lasting well into October.

***Vaccinium* 'Sunshine Blue'**
This self-fertile semi dwarf evergreen blueberry is the ideal choice for a foraging garden. Highly ornamental, and an acid lover requiring lime-free ericaceous compost.

Planting options

Bulbs and tubers
- *Allium* species including Nodding Onion *Allium cernuum*, Chinese onion *Allium chinense*, Welsh Onion *Allium fistulosum*
- Quamash *Camassia quamash*

Climbers for arches
- Grapevines
- Hops *Humulus lupulus*

Edible fence plants
- Wall-trained apples pears, mirabelles, peaches on dwarf rootstock
- Japanese wineberry *Rubus phoenicolasius*
- *Apios americana*
- *Schisandra grandiflora*

Flowering edibles
- Chicory *Cichorium intybus*
- Musk mallow *Malva moschata*
- Sweet cicely *Myrrhis odorata*
- *Campanula sarmatica* 'Hemelstraling'
- *Hemerocallis* Yellow cultivars are sweeter

Ground cover
- Snow Strawberry *Fragaria vesca* 'White Delight'
- Mashua *Tropaeolum tuberosum*
- Violets *Viola odorata* 'Hungarian Beauty'

Mid height/tall
- Perennial kale *Brassica oleracea* Botrytis Group
- Perennial broccoli *Brassica oleracea* Ramosa Group
- *Hosta ventricosa* AGM
- Sea kale *Crambe maritima* AGM
- Ice plant *Sedum spectabile* AGM
- Sweet cicely *Myrrhis odorata*

Perennial salad
- Good King Henry *Chenopodium bonus-henricus*
- Lovage *Levisticum officinale*
- Salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*
- Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare*
- Wild Rocket *Diplotaxis tenuifolia*

*HOLDS AN AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT FROM THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

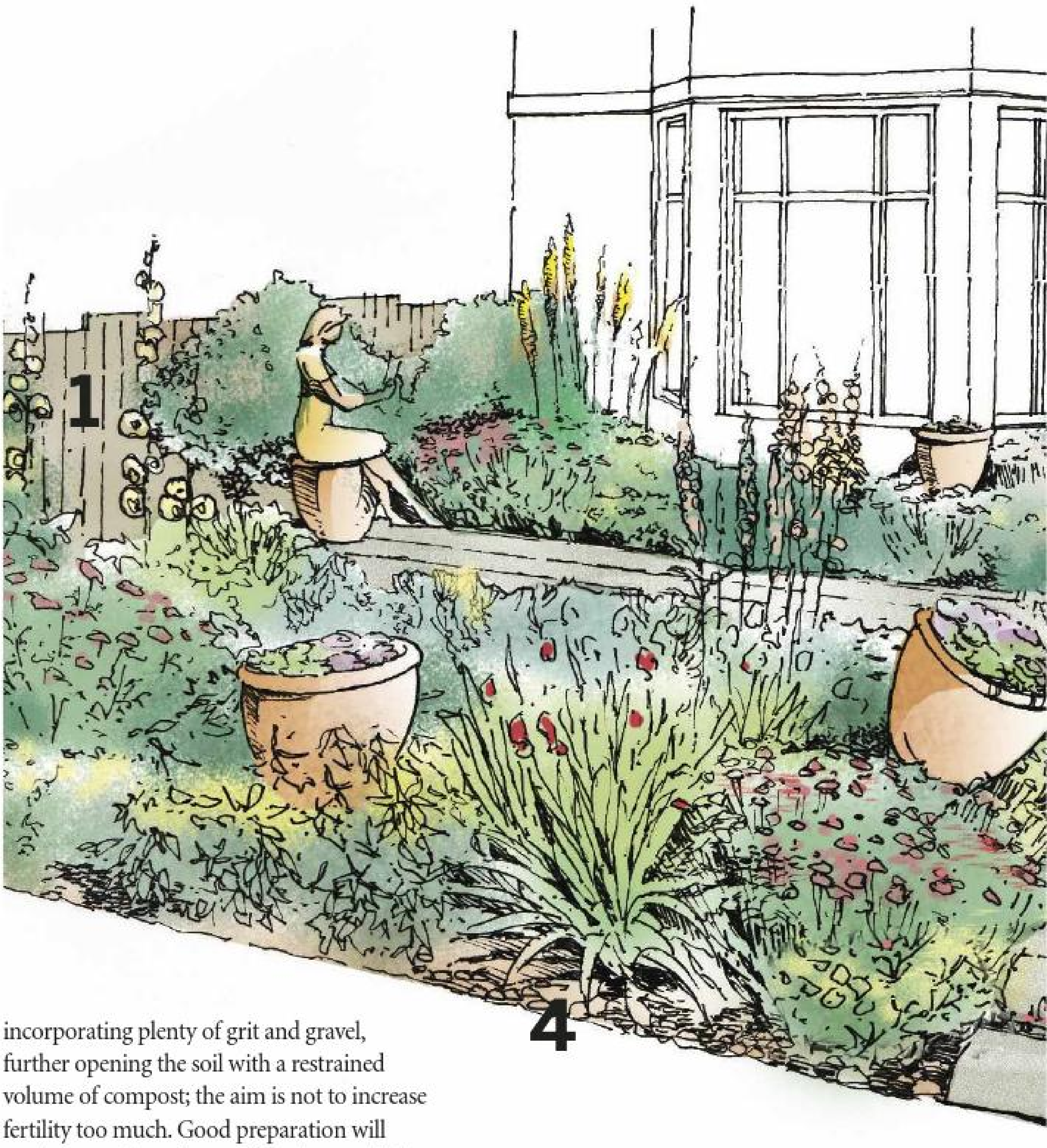
Arid garden

A hot, parched garden is an ideal home for arid heat-loving plants originating from harsh, dry conditions in their native home, and once established, plants accustomed to these environs will practically eliminate the need for watering. Given these conditions, we often reach for plants from the grey foliage palette, their light leaf colour indicating ease in reflecting burning sunshine. However, to my mind, too much grey can look banal and languid. Here the colour tones have been inspired by the unusual and beautiful *Rosa* x *odorata* 'Mutabilis', a good xeriscape plant that withstands extreme heat and drought.

The suitability of many of my selections can be recognised by the coping strategies they find necessary in their native homes. Arching grass *Pennisetum orientale* 'Karley Rose' has fine leaves, which minimise water loss, while the hairs dusting *Verbascum* 'Jester' or *V. chaixii* 'Sixteen Candles' trap moisture.

Unrestrained self-seeding plants create continuous change to the borders, often resulting in the happiest of planting accidents. Californian, wild red or opium poppies could all be included to great effect here – simply pull up superfluous plants. With so much flux in the scheme, structure is key, offered here by pots spilling with low growing succulents and in the ground, plantings of evergreen *Myrtus communis* subsp. *tarentina*.

Sharp drainage is key to success as most of these plants do not tolerate too much wet at their roots. Dig over your borders incorporating plenty of grit and gravel, further opening the soil with a restrained volume of compost; the aim is not to increase fertility too much. Good preparation will result in tough, undemanding plants, which once in the ground, will benefit from a good mulch of grit.



Key plants for an arid garden

***Iris* 'Sultan's Palace'**
This arresting, fiery iris is planted in groups. Plant rhizomes facing south for full exposure, and shallowly so the upper part of the rhizome sits on the soil's surface.

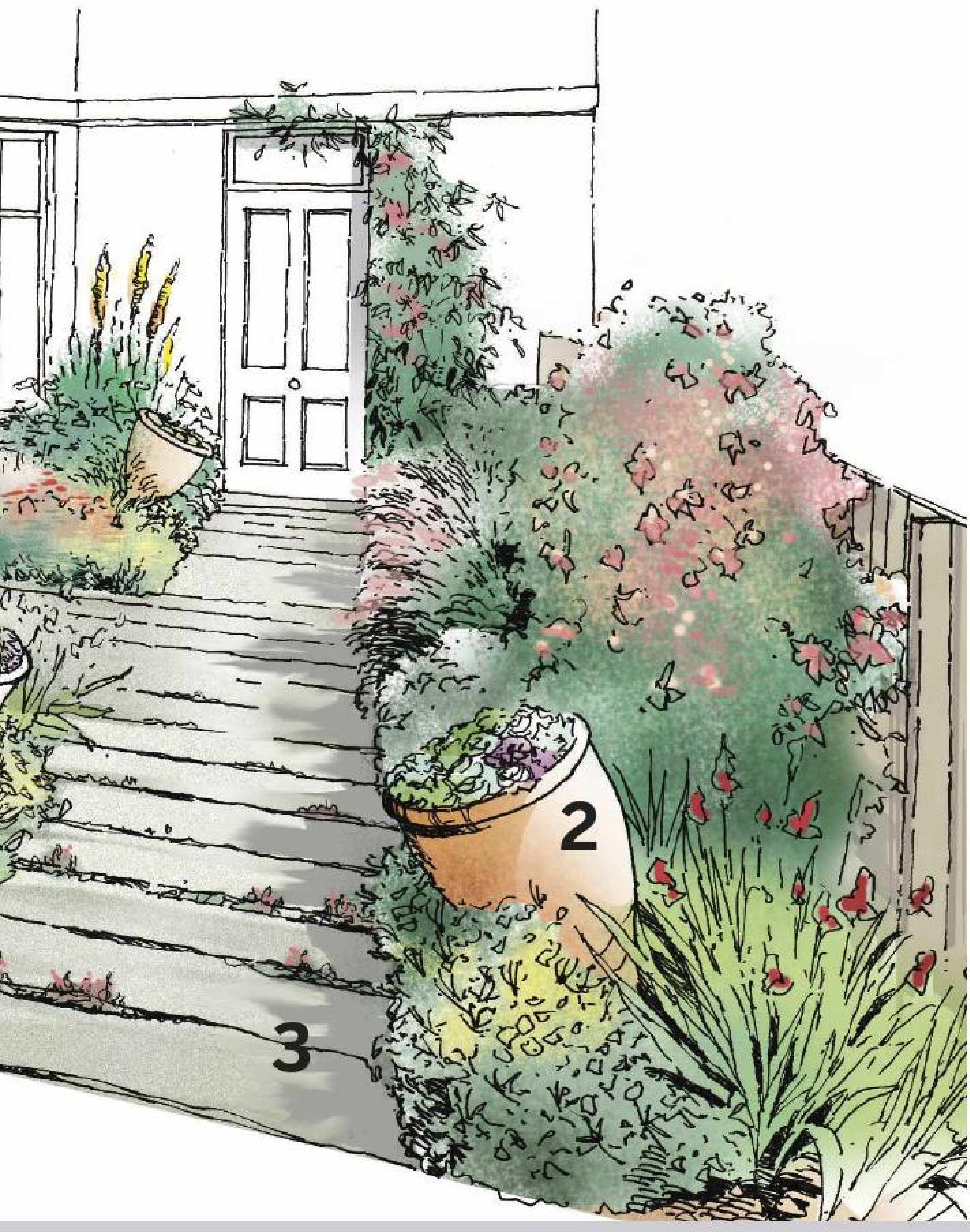
***Acaena microphylla* 'Kupferteppich'**
Evergreen, wonderfully thick ground cover with rich, copper brown foliage ideal to scramble through the joints of the garden's paving.

***Verbascum* 'Jester'**
A verbascum whose peachy tones echo our rose perfectly. Use it thrusting through plantings at the heart of borders to create rhythm. Reaches a height of 70cm.

***Rosa x odorata* 'Mutabilis'**
The long flowering season, early spring into latest autumn, is reason enough to consider including this in a small garden. Can be encouraged to climb. AGM.

Papaver somniferum
Opium poppies romp though the scheme by their own volition. For a continual display, scatter seeds at intervals where you please, thinning ruthlessly.

PLANT PORTRAITS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MIRIAM HEPPELL / ALAMY; DAVE BEVAN / GAP PHOTOS; TIM SANDALL / RHS IMAGES; MARIANNE MAJERUS; DAVE ZUBRASKI / GAP PHOTOS; LYNN KEDDIE / GAP PHOTOS. DESIGNED BY CLEVE WEST. JOHN MARTIN / ALAMY



1 Fencing

At the garden's edges, undulating upright boards of reclaimed hardwood timber or kiln-dried oak form a fence. Fixed at varying heights, hard sunlight will with time render them silver, emphasising the arid tones of the garden enclosed within.

2 Pots

Corkscrew pots 'screwed' into the ground and spilling with low-growing succulents are reminiscent of the long tap roots of many plants originating from dry landscapes. Fixing at jaunty angles ensures the effect isn't too orderly, with a single vase customised to form a seat. Perfect too for winter interest. Santavase flowerpots are available from www.ambientedirect.com

3 Paving

Rough, thick slabs of hammered stone laid across the path and into the garden echo stony outcrops of the arid landscape. Creeping, low groundcover planted between the paving softens the effect.

4 Gravel mulch

Chipped stone in a complementary tone to the paving is not only decorative, but provides a foil for plants, keeps soil cool, weeds down, bounces light and heat to support plant growth and helps crowns from rotting off in damp soil.

Dianthus cruentus
I first admired the deep crimson pink in Cleve West's *Daily Telegraph* garden at Chelsea 2011. Native to the Balkans, it will naturalise in dry soil. Easy to grow.

***Eremurus x isabellinus* 'Cleopatra'**
Thriving on freely drained soil, this would provide drama at the garden's edges. Mark tubers with canes to avoid piercing or crushing roots.

Planting options

Base grass
- *Pennisetum orientale* 'Karley Rose'

Bulbs
- *Eremurus* x *isabellinus* 'Cleopatra'
- *Gladiolus communis subsp. byzantinus* AGM
- *Nectaroscordum siculum*
- *Lilium* 'Hyawatha' *L.* 'Landini' *L.* 'Nerone'

Climbers
- *Rosa x odorata* 'Mutabilis' AGM
- *Passiflora* 'Fantasma'

Colourful blooms
- *Dianthus cruentus*
- *Iris* 'Sultan's Palace'
- *Alcea rugosa*
- *Alcea rosea* 'Nigra'
- *Achillea* 'Summerwine' AGM
- *Patrinia scabiosifolia*
- *Centranthus ruber*
- *Verbascum* 'Jester'
- *Verbascum chaixii* 'Sixteen Candles'

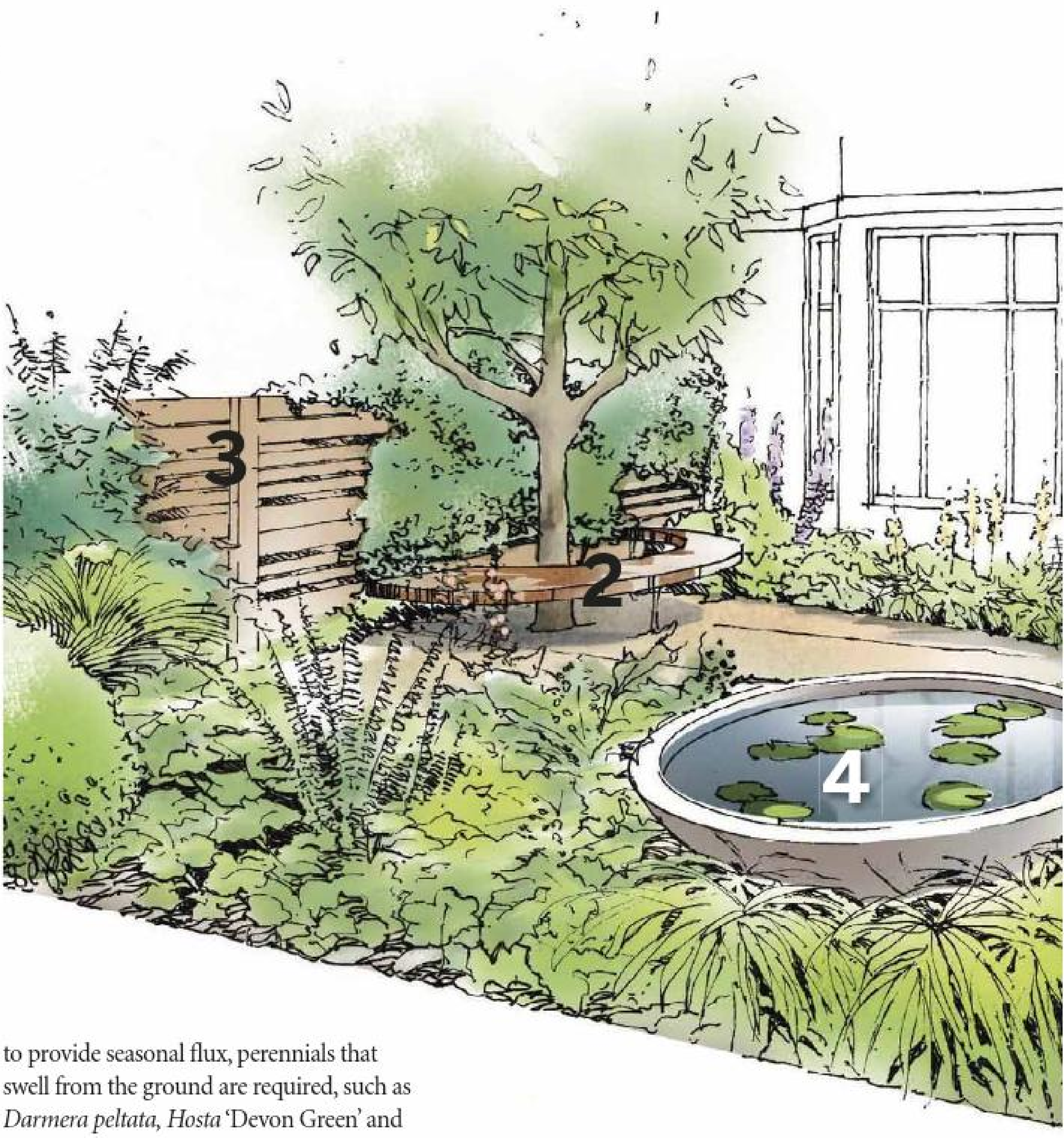
Ground cover
- *Acaena microphylla* 'Kupferteppich'
- *Euphorbia cyparissias* 'Fens Ruby'
- *Leptinella squalida* 'Platt's Black'

Pot plants
- *Sempervivum* sp.
- *Sedum acre*
- *Raoulia hookeri*

Self seeding annuals
- *Eschscholzia californica* AGM
- Wild red poppies *Papaver somniferum* *Papaver rhoeas*
- *Calendula officinalis* 'Indian Prince'

Structural plants
- *Artemisia ludoviciana* 'Valerie Finnis' AGM
- *Myrtus communis* subsp. *tarentina* AGM
- *Rosa x odorata* 'Mutabilis' AGM

Lush and green garden



A front garden cast into shadow by surrounding buildings, street trees or a north-facing aspect can be an emerald jewel of a garden when foliage is allowed to rule. Where patterns are created with leaf shape, colour and form without necessarily considering bloom, a mood of calm contemplation emerges.

Deep, moisture-retentive, fertile soil encourages leaf fecundity. Generous enrichment of the soil by adding plentiful garden compost, leaf mould or composted manure will provide a feast for foliage plants; condition the top 15cm of your soil before planting, and apply a deep mulch every year once your plants are in the ground.

Simple hard landscaping will not detract from the myriad tones, textures, sizes and shapes provided by layering green upon green. Restraining yourself to just one colour can be a liberating experience, though many shade-loving plants produce flowers, which almost become by-product to leaf, blooming in white, cream and biscuit. Add bulbs where you feel they would enrich the scene, their seasonal, low-level impact will be increased when framed by green.

An evergreen tree will add impact, focus and year round interest at the highest level. Here, a single-stemmed loquat *Eriobotrya japonica*, architectural with broad corrugated leaf, sets the tone. At its edges a boundary wrap of abundantly leaved evergreen *Trachelospermum jasminoides* camouflages fences even in the depths of winter. But to provide seasonal flux, perennials that swell from the ground are required, such as *Darmera peltata, Hosta* 'Devon Green' and *Zantedeschia aethiopica* 'Green Goddess'. Jostling at the front of border are *Asarum europaeum* and *Hakonechloa macra*, while thrusting bulbs provide impact.

Key plants for a lush and green garden

Eriobotrya japonica
A terrifically useful evergreen tree, which grows practically anywhere. Feed hefty amounts of manure at least once a year to keep plants looking fabulous. AGM.

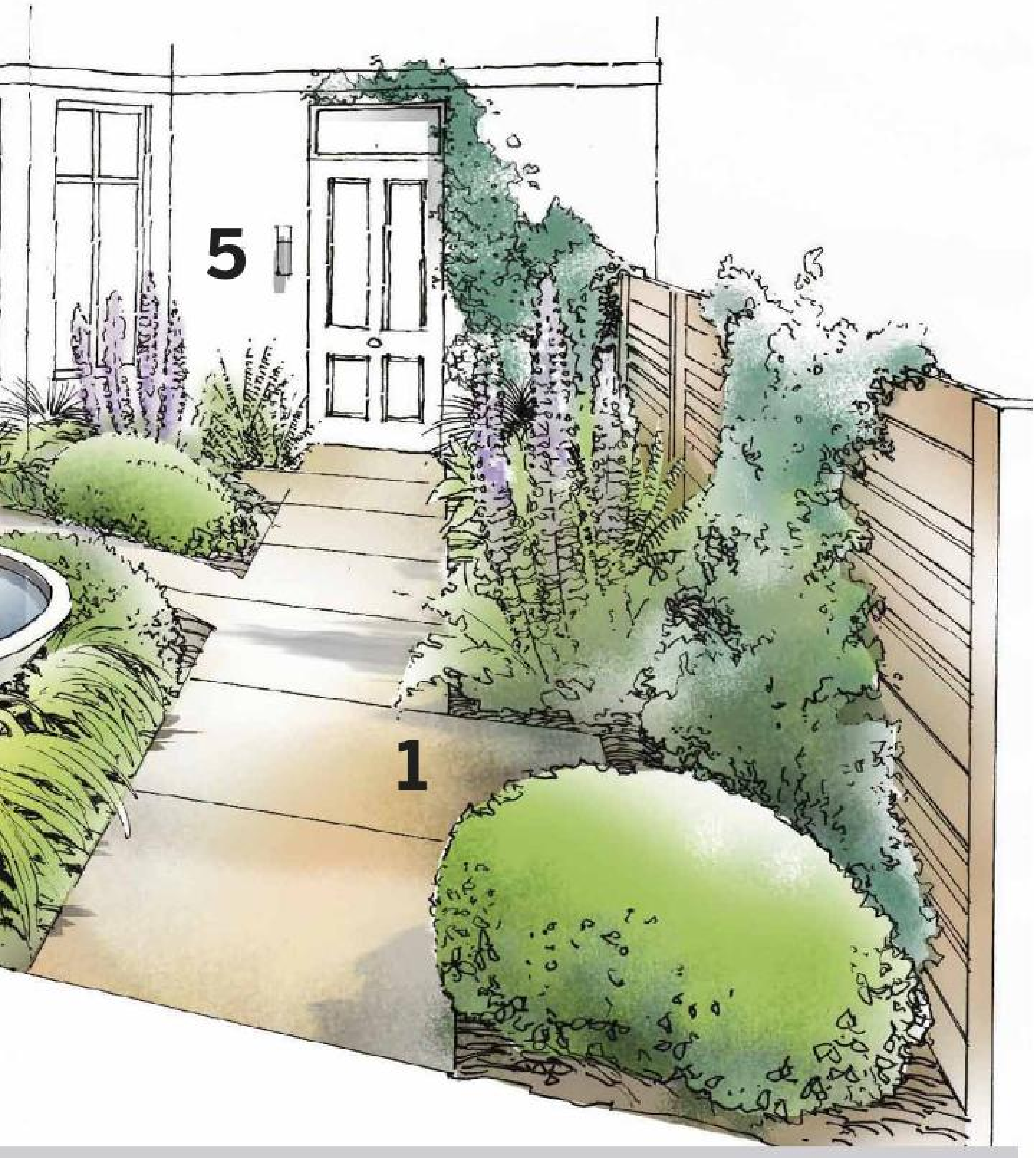
Dryopteris wallichiana
Though classed as deciduous, this upright fern covered in brown-black bristles is practically evergreen in milder areas, growing up to 90 cm tall. AGM.

***Pittosporum tobira* 'Nanum'**
This gorgeous deep green, glossy leaved plant enjoys moist deep soil and can even be planted in a pot. Wonderful for punctuating borders to provide winter interest.

Camassia leichtlinii
These brighten up the border in early summer. Plant bulbs 8cm deep and 20cm apart in big groups in the autumn, leaving them undisturbed for several years.

Trachelospermum jasminoides
This evergreen climber creates a good year-round backdrop where there isn't space for a hedge. Train stems horizontally on wires. AGM.

PLANT PORTRAITS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: PERNILLA BERGDAHL / GAP PHOTOS; TOMMY TONSBERG / GAP PHOTOS; JO WHITWORTH / GAP PHOTOS - DESIGN: DIARMUID GAVIN / STEPHEN REILLY RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW; PERNILLA BERGDAHL / GAP PHOTOS; JULIETTE WADE / GETTY IMAGES; ELKE BORKOWSKI / GAP PHOTOS



1 Hard landscaping

A simple, visually laid back surface treatment of seamless sawn Portland stone adds light to the space without detracting from the planting scheme. Slabs reaching into the borders become ground level stages for flops of foliage, widening into the main bed as a miniature terrace. The surfacing allows for easy border maintenance, and also space for a seat. Suppliers include www.stone-age.co.uk

2 Bench

A seat in the front garden is always a welcome addition. Here the sweeping seat echoes the curved outlines of plants such as *Darmera peltata* encircling a tree to become a beckoning focal point.

3 Boundaries

Constructed in the same timber as the seat, a multi-width fence adds texture, warmth and a tactile, natural hue, while the construction holds the eye within the space.

4 Pool

Accentuating the cool calm mood, a raised water bowl allows a new planting opportunity for a floating miniature waterlily such as *Nymphaea tetragona*. Raising the pond above the ground promotes its status. Try www.urbisdesign.co.uk

5 Lighting

No matter how subtle, a well-placed light by the front door is welcoming and enables you to slot a key into your front door without fumbling. See www.johncullenlighting.co.uk. □

***Hosta* 'Devon Green'**
Dark, glossy, textural leaves reflect light into our woodland-inspired scheme. Remains compact so suitable for the front of borders, and is reasonably slug-resistant too.

Planting options

Bold foliage
- *Rodgersia pinnata* 'La Blanche'
- *Aruncus dioicus* 'Zweiweltenkind'
- *Zantedeschia* 'Green goddess' AGM
- *Acanthus mollis*
- *Darmera peltata* AGM
- *Hosta* 'Devon Green'

Bulbs
- *Camassia leichtlinii*
- *Fritillaria raddeana*
- *Lilium martagon* AGM, *L. lancifolium*
- *Leucojum aestivum* and *L. vernum* AGM

Climbers
- *Trachelospermum jasminoides* AGM
- *Pileostegia viburnoides* AGM
- *Hydrangea petiolaris*
- *Akebia quinata*
- *Clematis armandii*

Evergreen
- *Nandina domestica* AGM
- *Dryopteris wallichiana* AGM
- *Hakonechloa macra*
- *Pittosporum tobira* 'Nanum'

Trees
- *Arbutus unedo* AGM, *A. glandulosa*, *A.* x *andrachnoides* AGM
- *Eriobotrya japonica* AGM
- *Daphniphyllum macropodum*
- *Drimys winteri* AGM
- *Myrtus apiculata*
- *Osmanthus yunnanensis*
- *Trochodendron aralioides*

Law in the front garden

Planning permission is required:
- When paving an area larger than five square metres using non-permeable paving.
- If constructing a wall or fence more than 1m high, when adjacent to a public highway or footpath.
- With a listed house or if the garden is within the curtilage of a listed building.

Planning permission is not required:
- When using permeable paving or allowing water to run off into a lawn or border.

8 ideas for front gardens

Your front garden can make a strong first impression, so here are the essential considerations that will help you make the most of your space

1 Front door impact

Small standard trees make your home's entrance impactful. Added uplighting would guide visitors after dark. If you are concerned about subsidence, plant door-side specimens in large pots.

2 Use windowsills

In the smallest of gardens, windowsills are another planting opportunity, becoming living floral arrangements to be viewed from both inside and out. Match your containers to your garden's style.

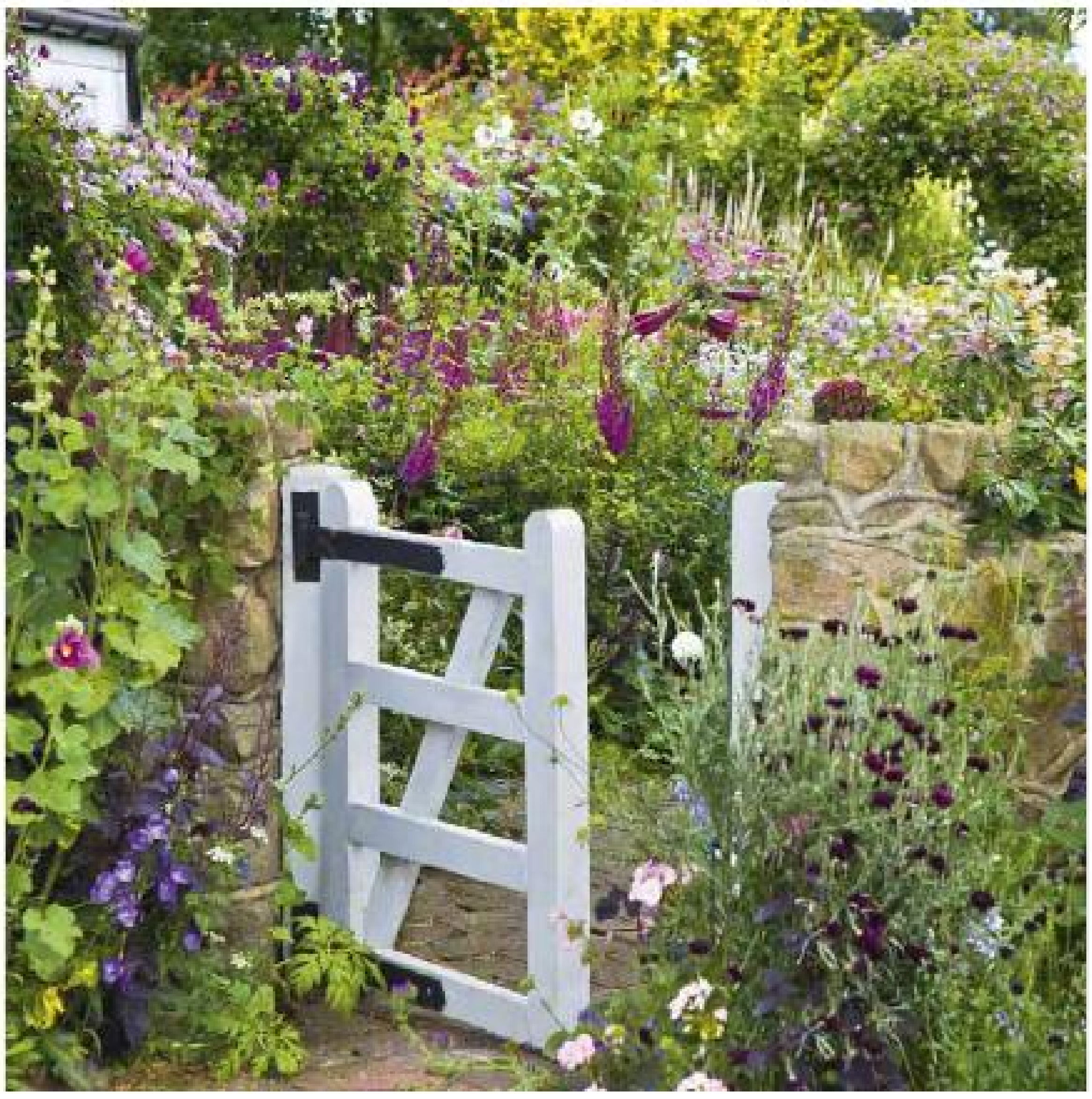
3 Use walls

In the smallest of front gardens, planting vertically may be your only choice. Here, a careful selection of dense blue *Ceanothus* adds dramatic intensity to this property's entrance during spring.

4 Evergreen

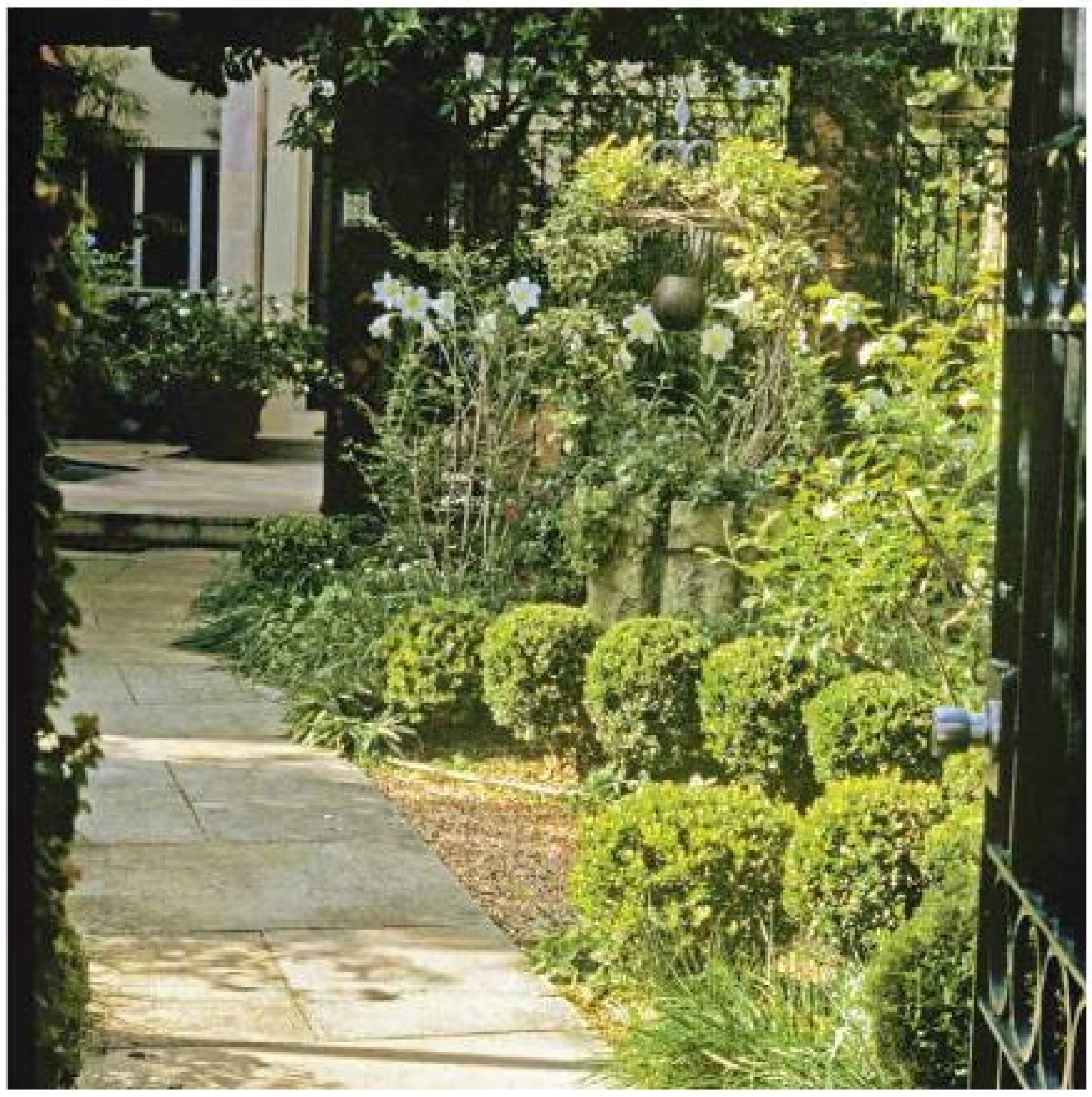
In the front garden where you may find yourself gardening in public, plentiful evergreen foliage lends privacy. The hedge-edged borders with variegated privet standards add year-round structure.

1 ELKE BORKOWSKI; 2 & 6 JANET JOHNSON; 3 HOWARD RICE; 4 LEIGH CLAPP - DESIGN SUSAN SHARKEY; 5 RON EVANS; 7 MATT ANKER - DESIGN WENDY ALLEN; 8 STEVEN WOOSTER. ALL GAP PHOTOS



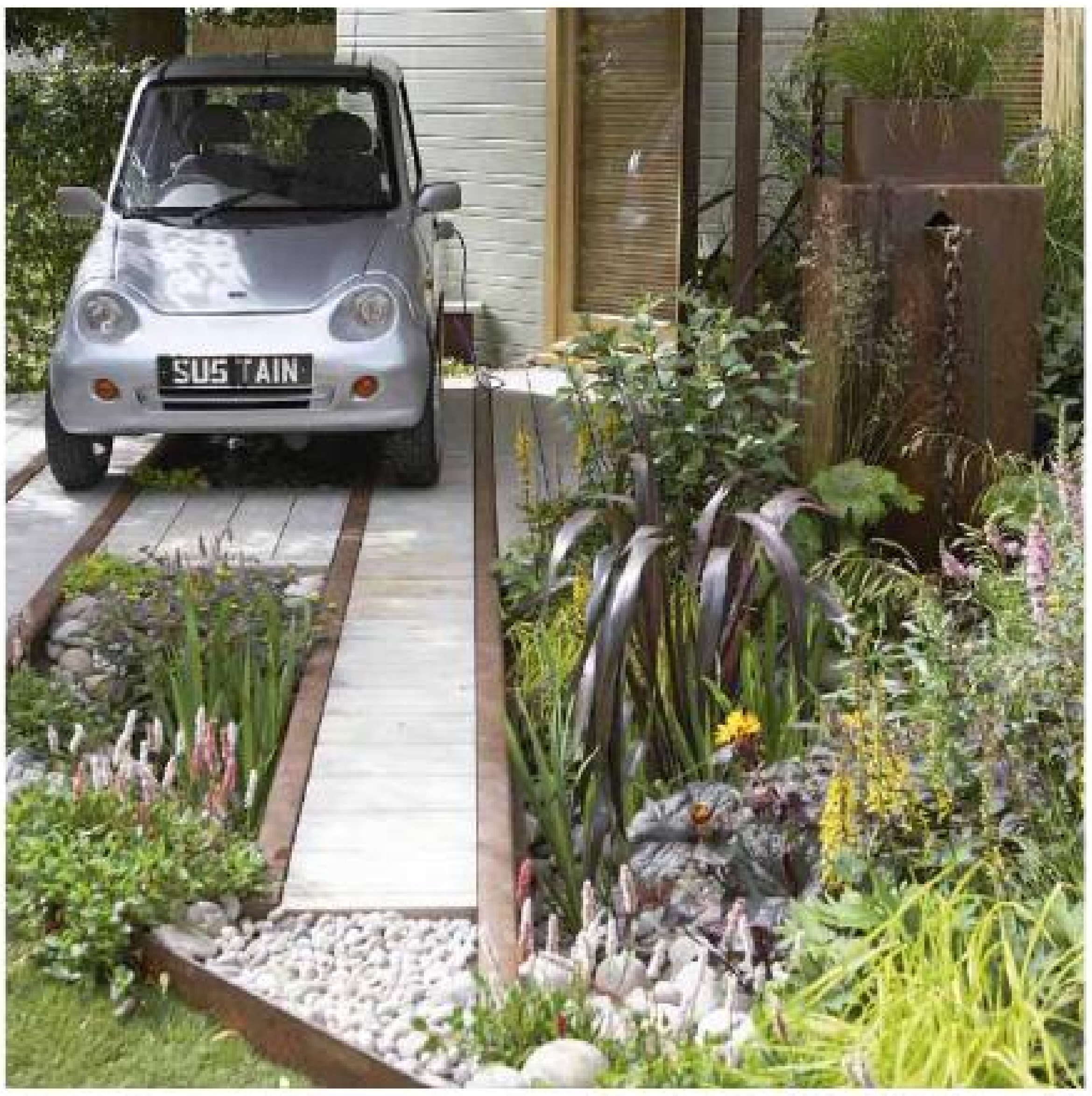
5 Breaking boundaries

A stone wall and smart wooden gate make an inviting entrance and can be softened by a loose planting scheme that spills over pathways. Here, houseleeks have also been planted on top of the stone work.



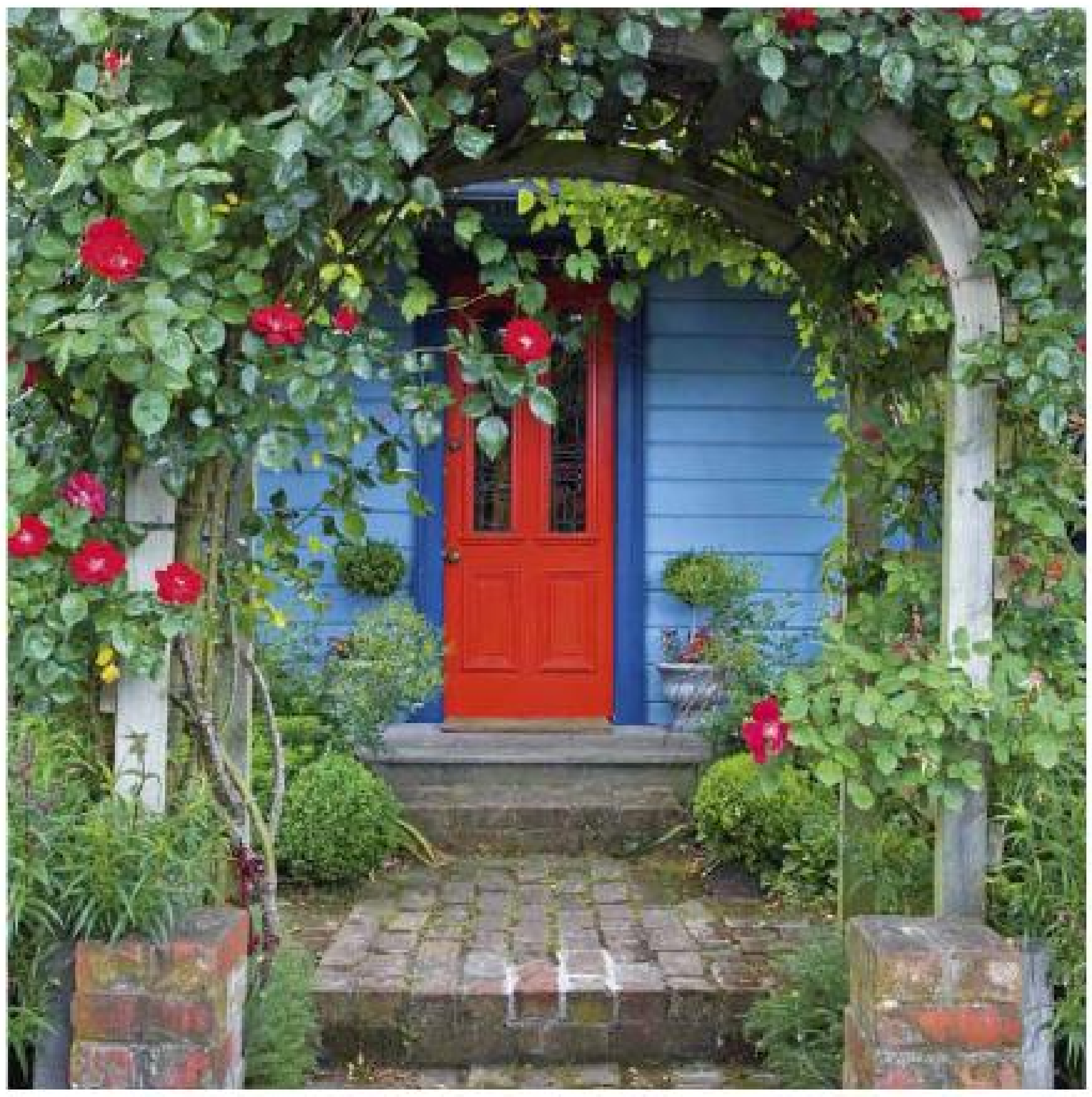
6 Practical low maintenance

This wide sandstone path, surrounded by weed-suppressing gravel planted with box balls and *Lilium regale*, is simple yet practical. The path is wide and the planting is welcoming and low maintenance.



7 Parking

All new drives with an area of over five square metres must have planning permission; unless they are constructed from a water-permeable material or allow water to run to a permeable area.



8 Be bold

This colourful rose trained over an arch at the front garden's entrance matches and frames the front door perfectly. This bold treatment is filled with personality, ensuring this property stands out on its street.

Wallflowers

Busy, long-lasting and often sweetly scented, the erysimum can brighten your garden, bridging the months from spring through to summer

WORDS **VAL BOURNE** PHOTOGRAPHS **SHARON PEARSON**

In brief

What Erysimum.
Common name Wallflower.
Origins 180 species, including 80 Mediterranean and 39 European, but also from Macaronesia, North America and Puerto Rica.
Season Biennials flower in late spring, producing fragrant flowers that go well with late April and May tulips. The perennial forms flower earlier over many months.
Size Heights usually vary from 30cm-60cm, though 'Bowles's Mauve' can form a large 1m-high roundel when happy.
Conditions Good drainage and poorer soils. Give them a warm, open position in full sun to draw out the fragrance of the biennial forms.

***ERYSIMUM* 'RUSTON ROYAL'**
A robust cultivar with strong, woody stems and an upright habit. Flowers on long racemes, forming an evergreen bush. Spikes of light and dark mauve flowers that age to a paler lilac. Full sun and well-drained soil.

Val Bourne is an award-winning garden writer, photographer and lecturer. She gardens in the windswept Cotswolds

By the time the spring sunshine begins to warm your back and lift your spirits the perennial wallflower is already providing a wealth of bee-friendly flowers. It will continue to please for months, lingering long after Midsummer's Day, so it's one of the most generous plants any gardener can grow. Some forms of this cottage-garden favourite are sweetly scented too: their distinctive fragrance hovering somewhere between parma violet and mellow honey. They can boost the gardener's soul when little else is flowering.

The secret of their bounty is that most perennial wallflowers, or erysimums, produce sterile flowers that can't set seed. They respond by pushing up a nonstop succession of flowering spikes. Their simple, four-petalled flowers betray their allegiance to the cabbage family or *Brassicaceae*. Like most family members, light soil and full sun are preferred and many erysimums are found naturally in drier parts of southern Europe, although there are some species in Asia, the Canary Islands and North America.

The crown for the longest flowering of all must go to *E.* 'Bowles's Mauve' [pictured on page 57]. This grey-leaved bushy wallflower, packed with violet flower spikes, was named after EA Bowles (1865-1954) the famous owner of Myddelton House near Enfield. However, Bowles didn't actually grow it, according to his gardeners, and it's unlikely to have occurred as a seedling following his death, because Bowles majored in jaunty, bright-yellow wallflowers. So it remains an enigma. It was launched in 1982 and given an Award of Garden Merit in 1993. 'Bowles's Mauve' will flower for nine months of the year, so if you only have room for one, this is it. 'Bredon', also given an AGM in 1993, is a scented compact yellow single that came from Ron Sidwell (1909-1993), who gardened on Bredon Hill in Worcestershire. Ron, who bred the Bird series of penstemons in the 1960s, also bred a double seed-raised strain of wallflower, sadly lost to cultivation. ▷

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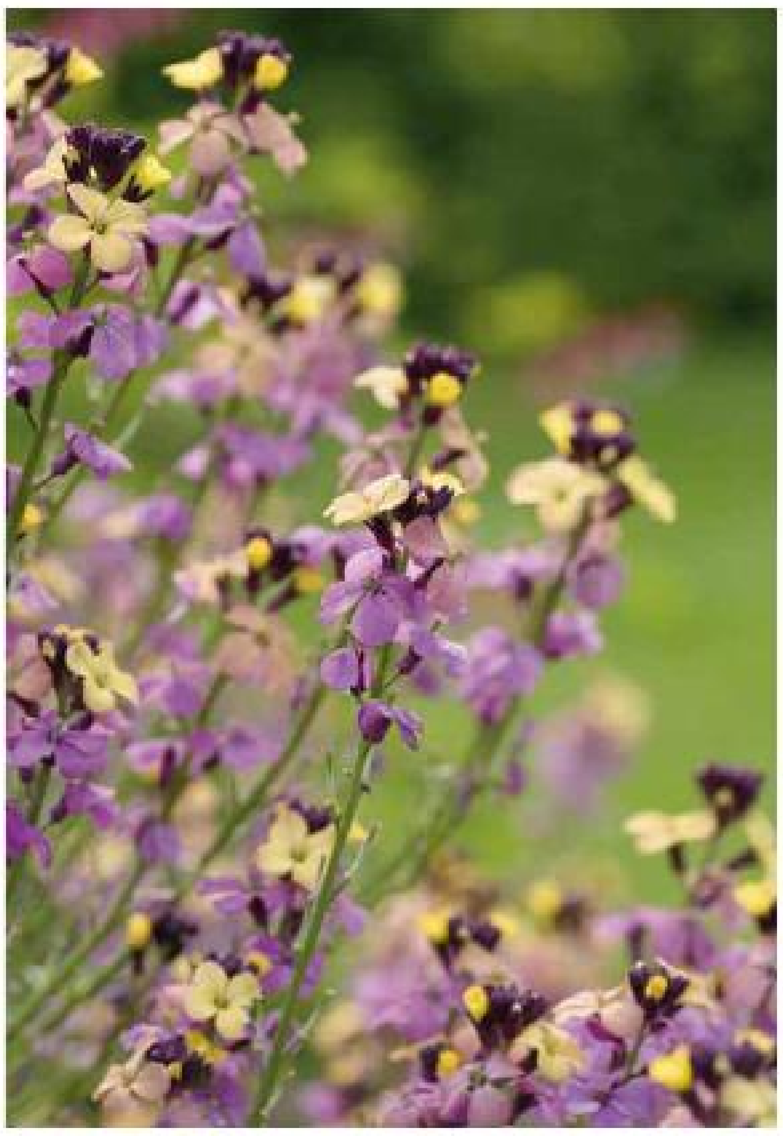
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ Double cultivars have been highly prized for centuries. A 1629 woodcut in John Parkinson's book *Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris* clearly shows a double form among the singles. *E. cheiri* 'Harpur Crewe' [page 60] has scented yellow double flowers and dark green foliage. It keeps a compact habit and survives well from year to year – I have never had trouble propagating it. It was discovered in a Scottish garden by the Rev. Henry Harpur-Crewe (1828-1883), once the rector of Drayton Beauchamp in Buckinghamshire. *E. cheiri* 'Bloody Warrior' is another famous double with blood-red flowers. Margery Fish, the doyenne of cottage gardening, grew 'Harpur Crewe' and 'Bloody Warrior' in her Somerset garden at East Lambrook. She describes 'Bloody Warrior' as a 'difficult and desiccated old gentleman', and one senses her struggle to deal with an awkward character. Plant Heritage collection holder, Dr Simon Weeks, has struggled to locate the correct form among many impostors.

Some of our loveliest wallflowers are chameleons with indescribable flowers that seem to shimmer between violet, butterscotch and brick-pink. *E.* 'Constant Cheer' [page 59], the most well known, has been around for many years. It's low-growing, flowers early in the year and the dark-green leaves have a distinctive wavy edge. *E.* 'Jacob's Jacket' [page 58] is more vibrant. However both have been replaced in my affections by *E.* 'Parrish's' [top right], which I found at Derry Watkin's Special Plants near Bath. It came from the much-missed nursery The Hannays of Bath, which closed ten years ago. It's early, fragrant and the buds are almost black. It sprawls, so it needs space.

Simon Weeks, the Plant Heritage national collection holder, is tracking down lost wallflowers (including old biennials once listed under *Cheiranthus*) for his Suffolk collection. Their natural tendency to dwindle away makes the task difficult. One of his great discoveries is the large-flowered, cherry-red 'Ellen Willmott'. This unique wallflower, widely grown in the 1930s, was on the Pink Sheet of rare garden plants (produced by Plant Heritage). However it's proving very perennial. Plants like this can be acquired from Simon Weeks – details on page 60. ☐

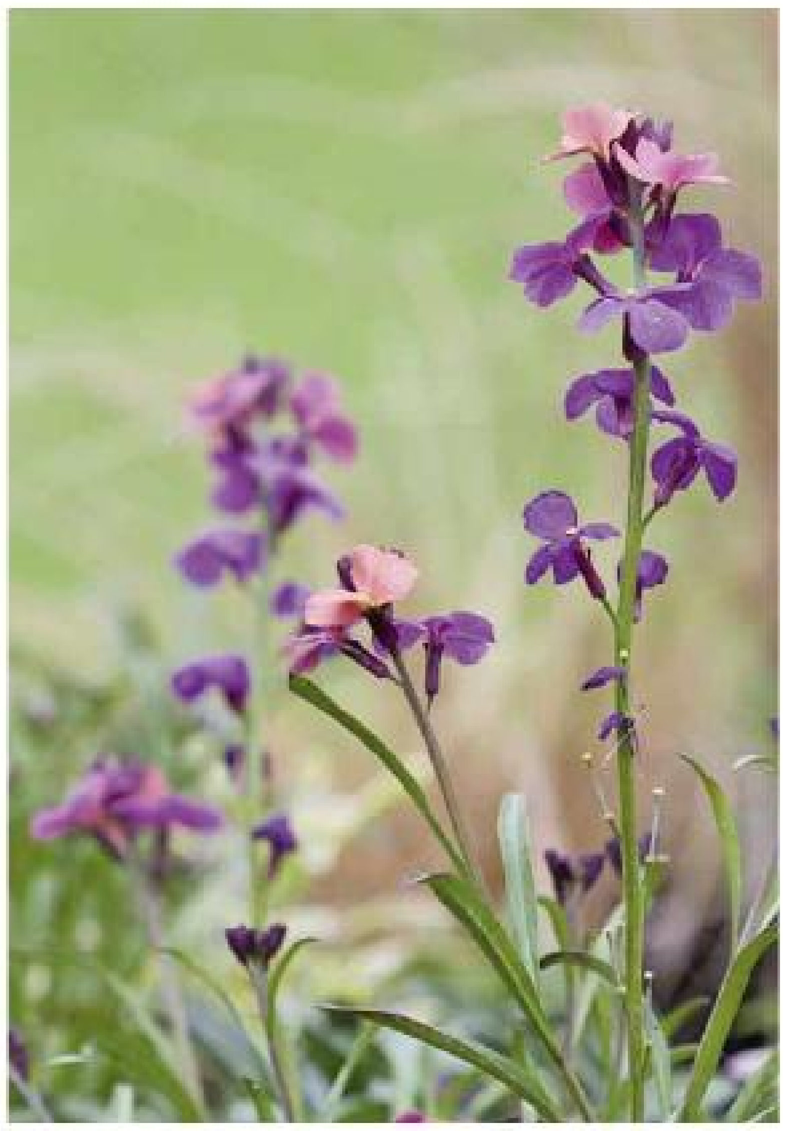
• Val's pick of erysimums continues over the next six pages



SHARON PEARSON / GAP PHOTOS

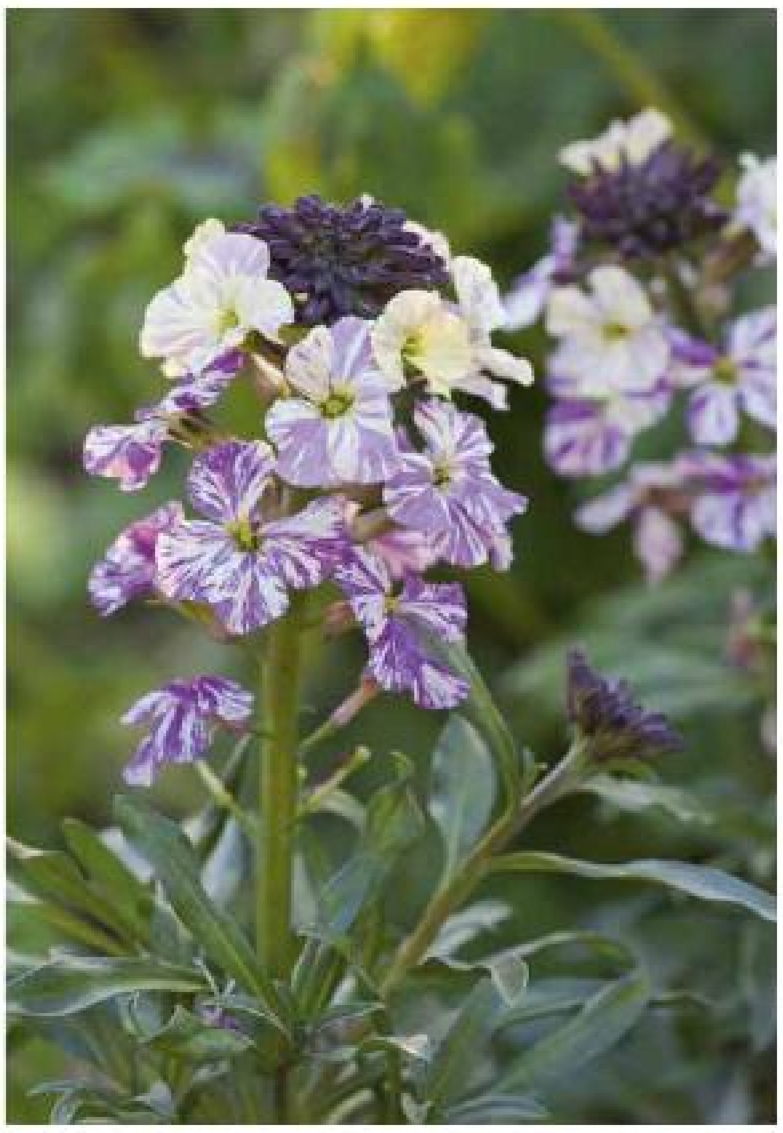
ERYSIMUM MUTABILE

Pretty flowers that change from soft primrose-yellow to mauve. The grey foliage, indicating a need for a sunny position, is similar to 'Bowles's Mauve', although it's a smaller plant in stature. Sterile so stays in flower for many weeks.



***E.* 'PARRISH'S'**

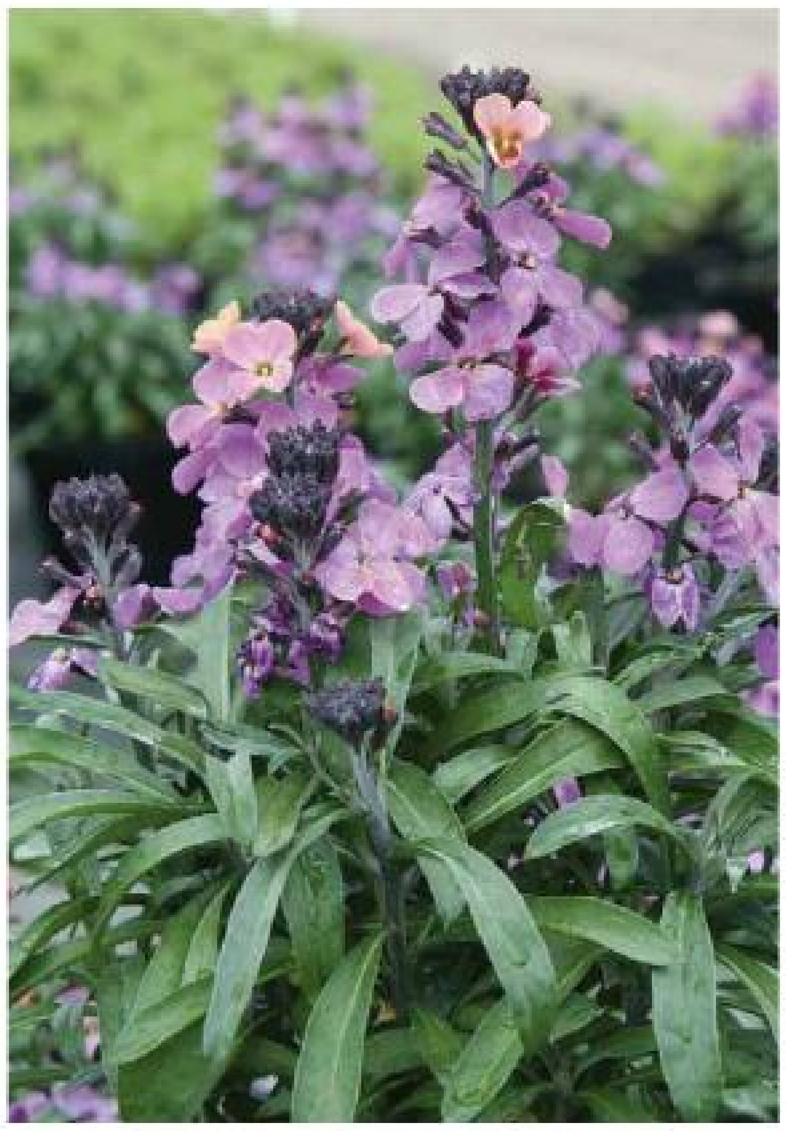
Multicoloured flowers that shimmer between brick-pink, butterscotch and violet. Probably found in a garden owned by the Parrish family (close to Bath), it forms a large curtseying plant that billows over paths. Sweetly scented with neat green foliage.



GAP PHOTOS

***E.* 'MY OLD MUM'**

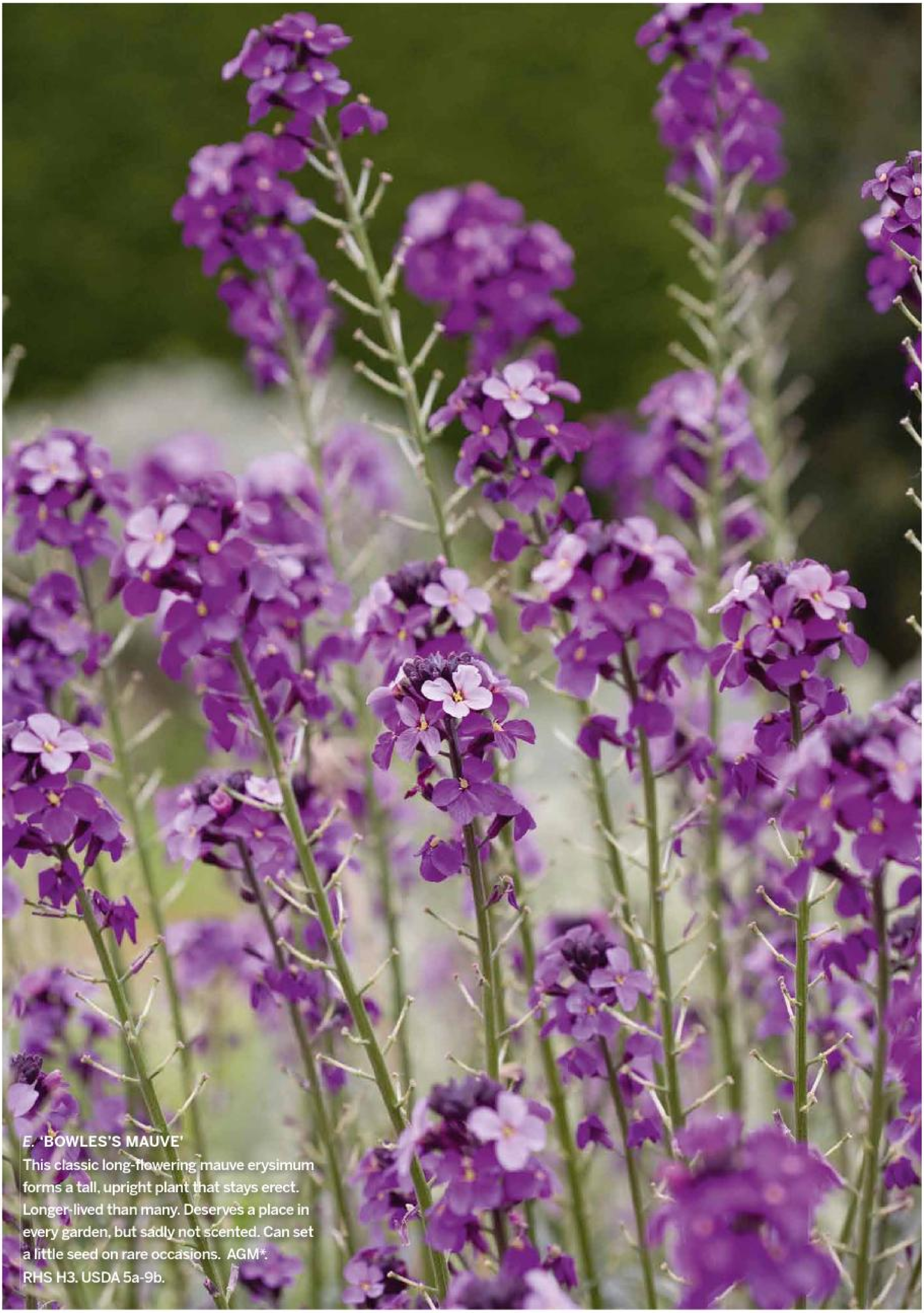
Associated with Bridge End Nursery in Scotland, this creamy yellow wallflower has mauve striations. Purple buds contrast perfectly with the flowers. Happy in borders or containers in full sun.



FHF GREENMEDIA / GAP PHOTOS

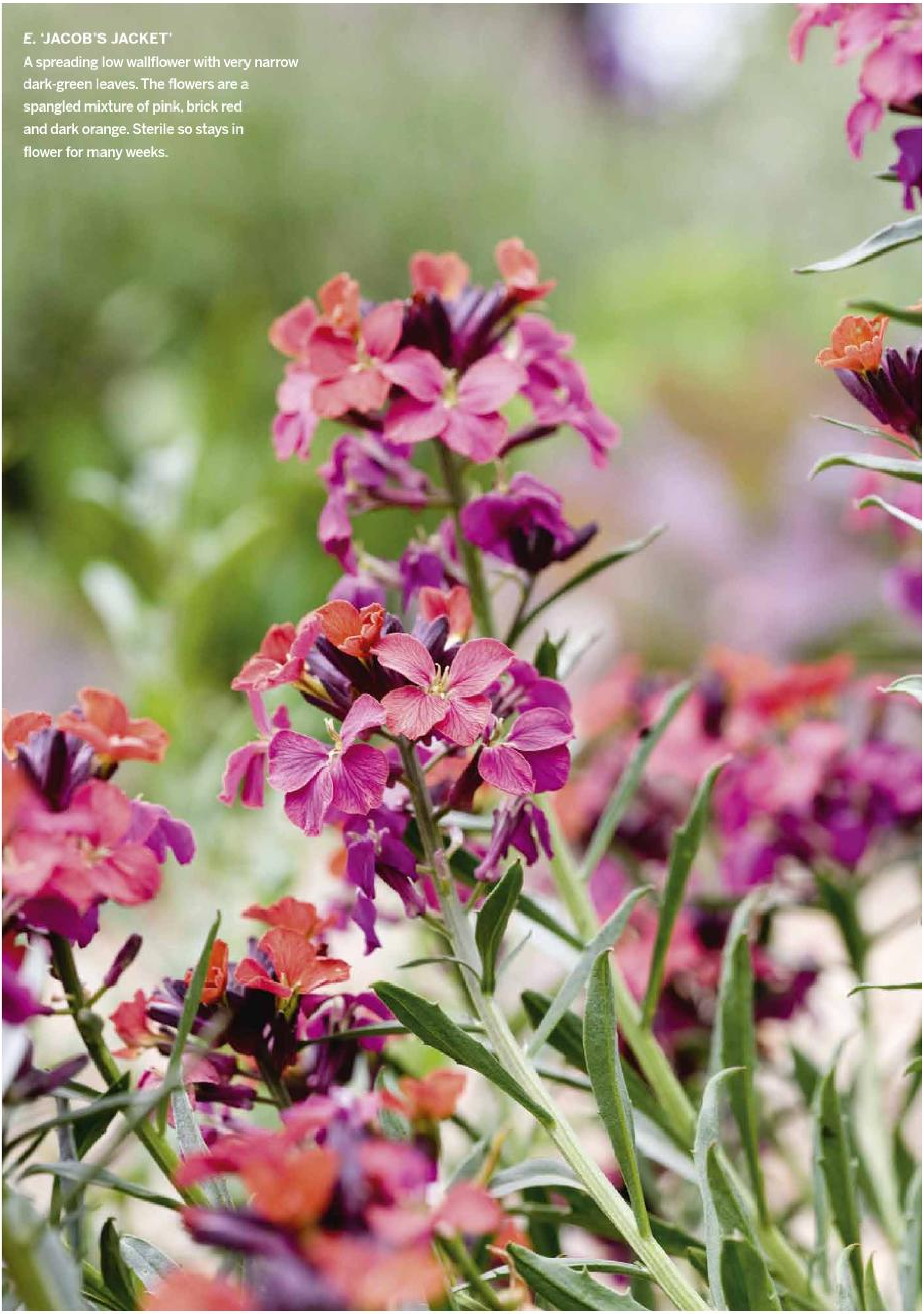
***E.* 'HECTOR'S GATEPOST'**

Bred by the late Hector Harrison, this upright wallflower combines good mauve-purple and brick-pink to orange flowers held above good green foliage. USDA 7a-9b[†].



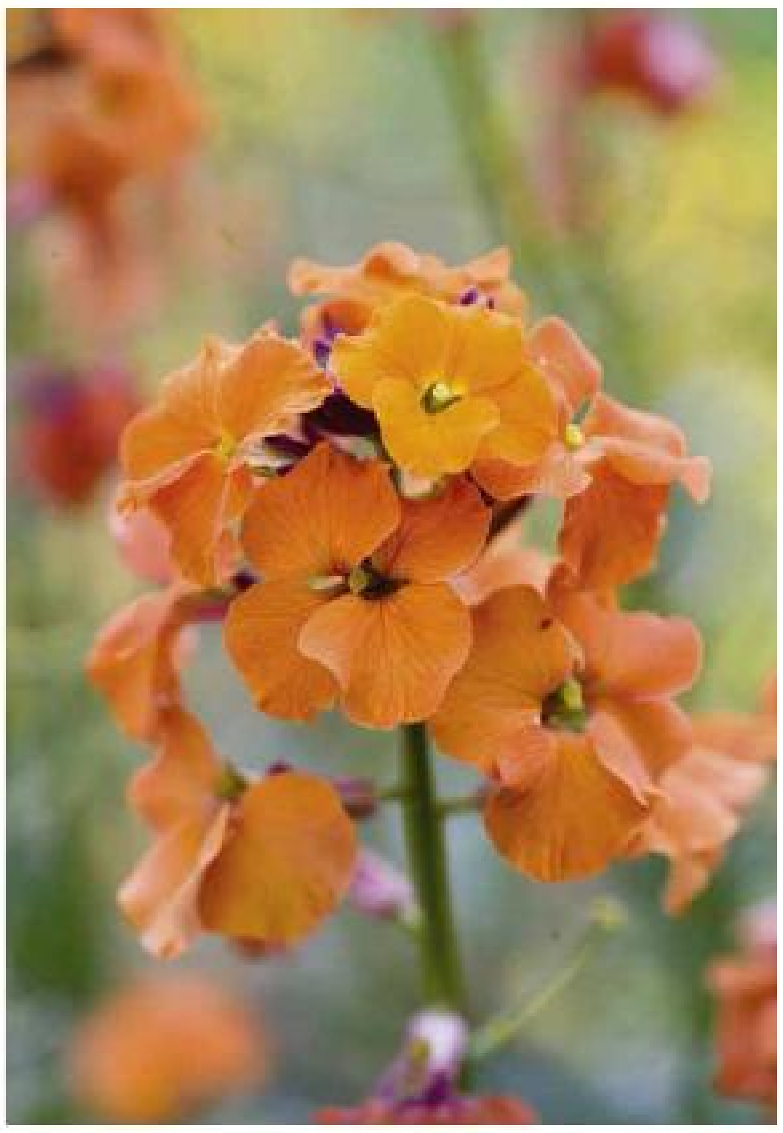
E. **'BOWLES'S MAUVE'**

This classic long-flowering mauve erysimum forms a tall, upright plant that stays erect. Longer-lived than many. Deserves a place in every garden, but sadly not scented. Can set a little seed on rare occasions. AGM*. RHS H3. USDA 5a-9b.

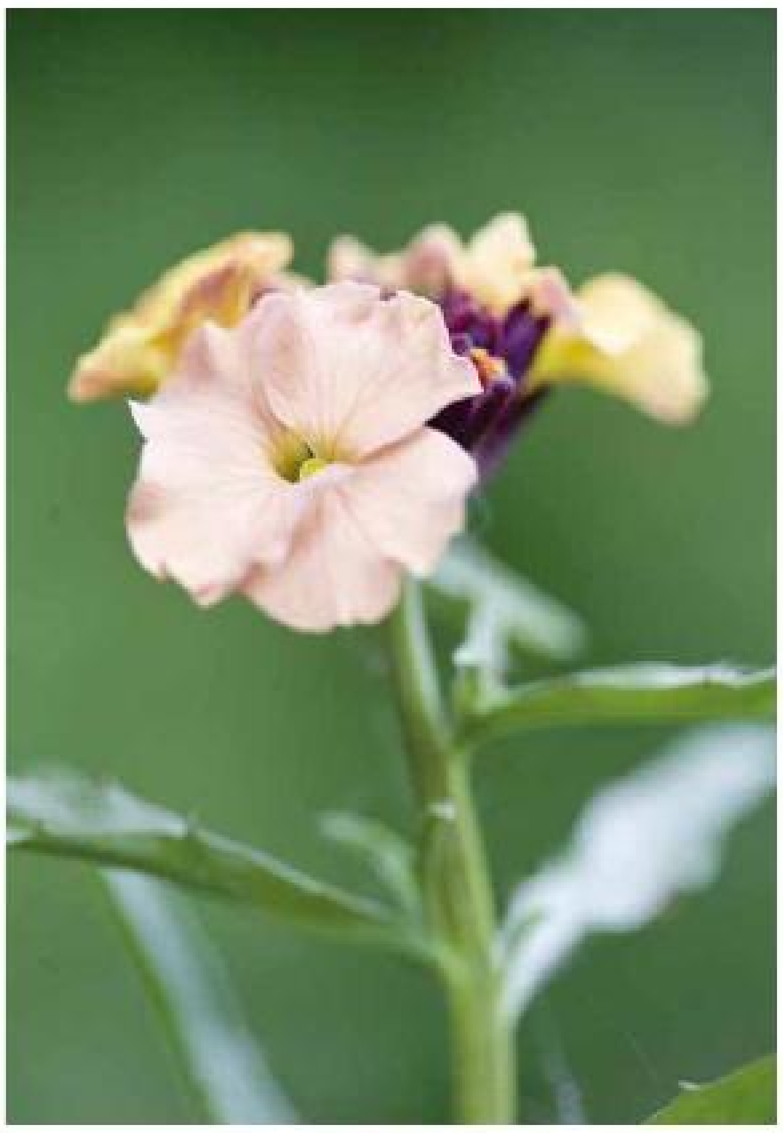


***E.* ‘JACOB’S JACKET’**

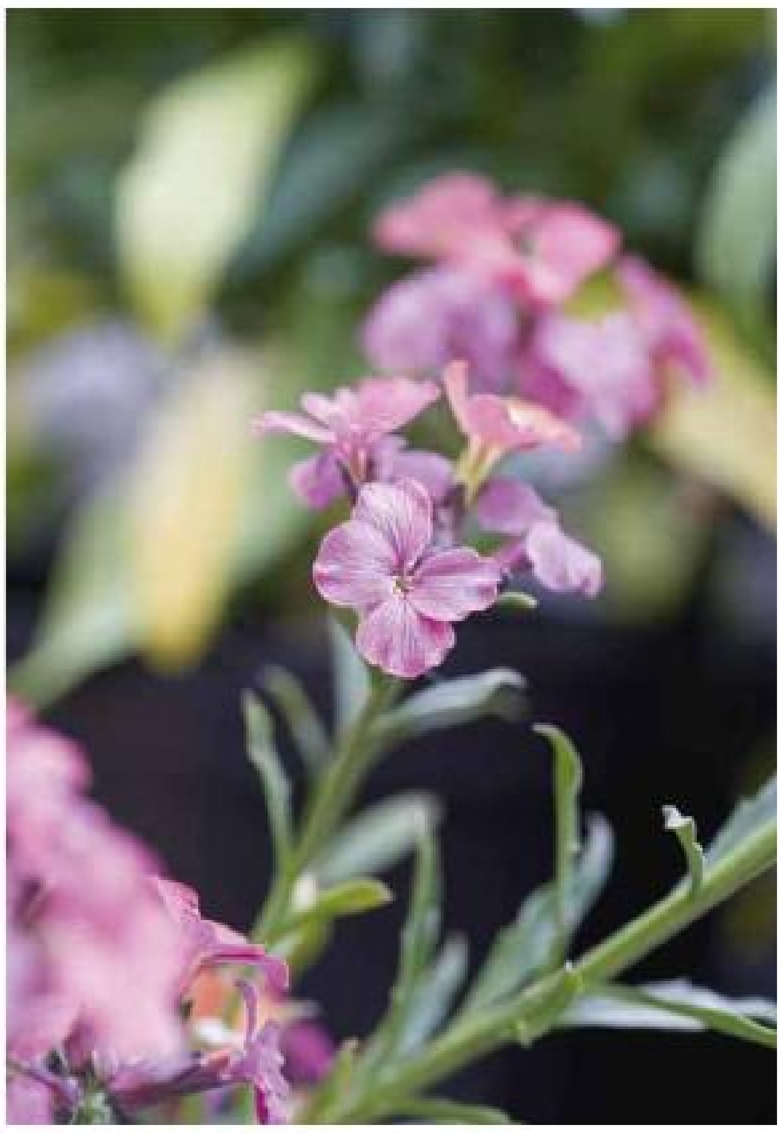
A spreading low wallflower with very narrow dark-green leaves. The flowers are a spangled mixture of pink, brick red and dark orange. Sterile so stays in flower for many weeks.



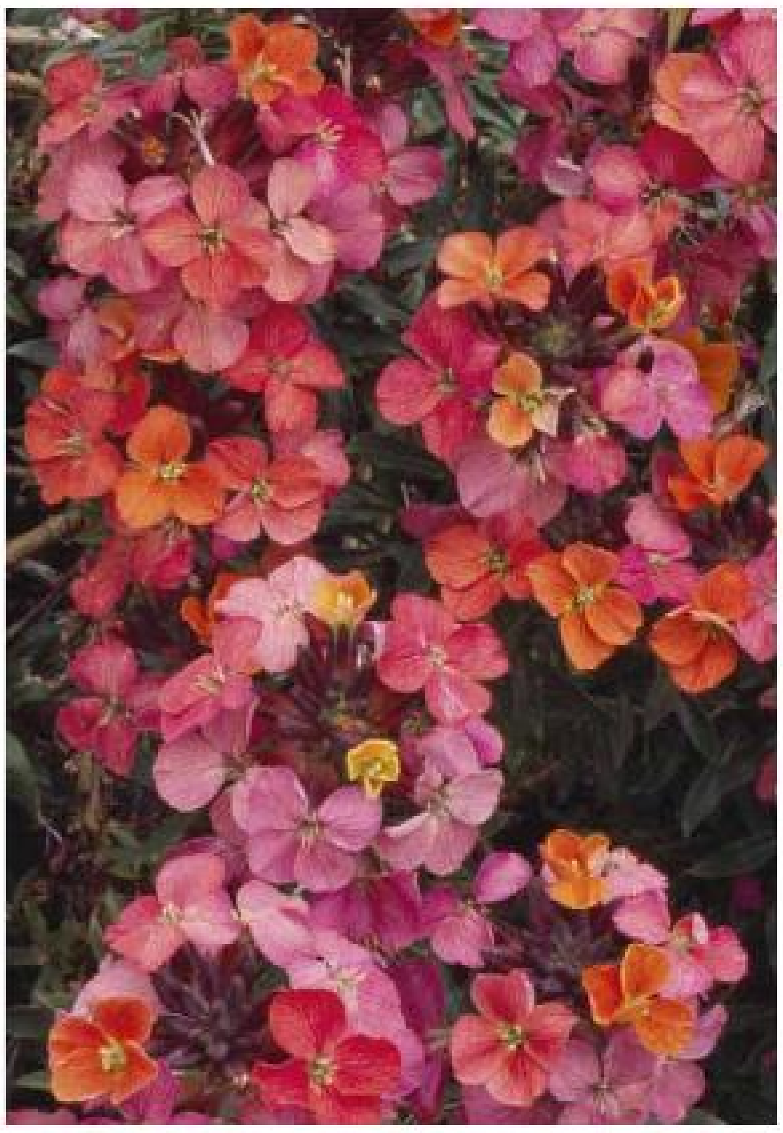
E. 'APRICOT TWIST'
Another foot-high erysimum with vivid apricot flowers emerging from dark buds against dark-green foliage. It must be cut back regularly, otherwise it tails off. Very readily available here and in America. Lovely with dark tulips. Fragrant. RHS H4. USDA 5a-9b.



E. 'PASTEL PATCHWORK'
A new and unique cultivar with faded, pastel flowers in pink, gold and apricot. Looking mellow in sunlight, but the leggy, lax habit means it has to be cut back hard once flowering is waning. Collection holder Simon Weeks says it flowers well in autumn. USDA 4b-10b.



E. 'CONSTANT CHEER'
One of the oldest cultivars, producing flowers over many weeks on a compact plant. The brick-pink flowers age to mauve above dark-green narrow leaves which have a wavy edge. Sterile so stays in flower for many weeks. USDA 6a-9b.



CLIVE NICHOLS

E. 'WENLOCK BEAUTY'
An old cultivar with small leaves and sunset-coloured flowers with more orange than purple. Eyecatching in spring and low-growing. USDA 5a-10b.

Propagation and taxonomy

- Wallflowers used to be divided into two genera – *Erysimum* and *Cheiranthus*. Generally *Cheiranthus* featured seed-raised biennials, often hybrids, and *Erysimum* contained short-lived perennials and alpines, but there were no conclusive botanical differences between the two. Sensibly the two genera are now under *Erysimum* and comprise 180 annual, biennial and woody-based perennials.
- Erysimums left to their own devices have a tendency to become woody and leggy and then fizzle out within four to five years, usually succumbing over winter. The way to extend their lifespan and keep them compact and vigorous is to give them a yearly midsummer trim by cutting into the foliage. However if the stems are very woody, cut back hard to the base, but try to take a few insurance cuttings straight afterwards. You will have to sacrifice some flowers, but many will rebloom. By early to mid-July your plant will have bushed out to provide plenty of cutting material. Look for 7-10cm shoots that have begun to firm up slightly. If your cuttings have flower buds, remove them. Trim under the node and plunge them into small seed trays filled with damp horticultural sand, or gritty compost. Pot up if rooted in early September. If not, leave them alone until next April. Give your new plants a warm, sunny position and well-drained conditions. Add grit to heavy soil.

Legend and history

- Wallflowers have been grown in Britain for centuries and may have come here with the Normans. The name *Cheiranthus* is thought to derive from the Greek for hand (cheir) and flower (anthos) and the heavily scented flowers were carried as nosegays to smother the stench of Elizabethan streets. Their Latin name, *Erysimum*, is said to be derived from erno, meaning to draw up. Their alternative common name, blister cress, confirms their reputation ▷

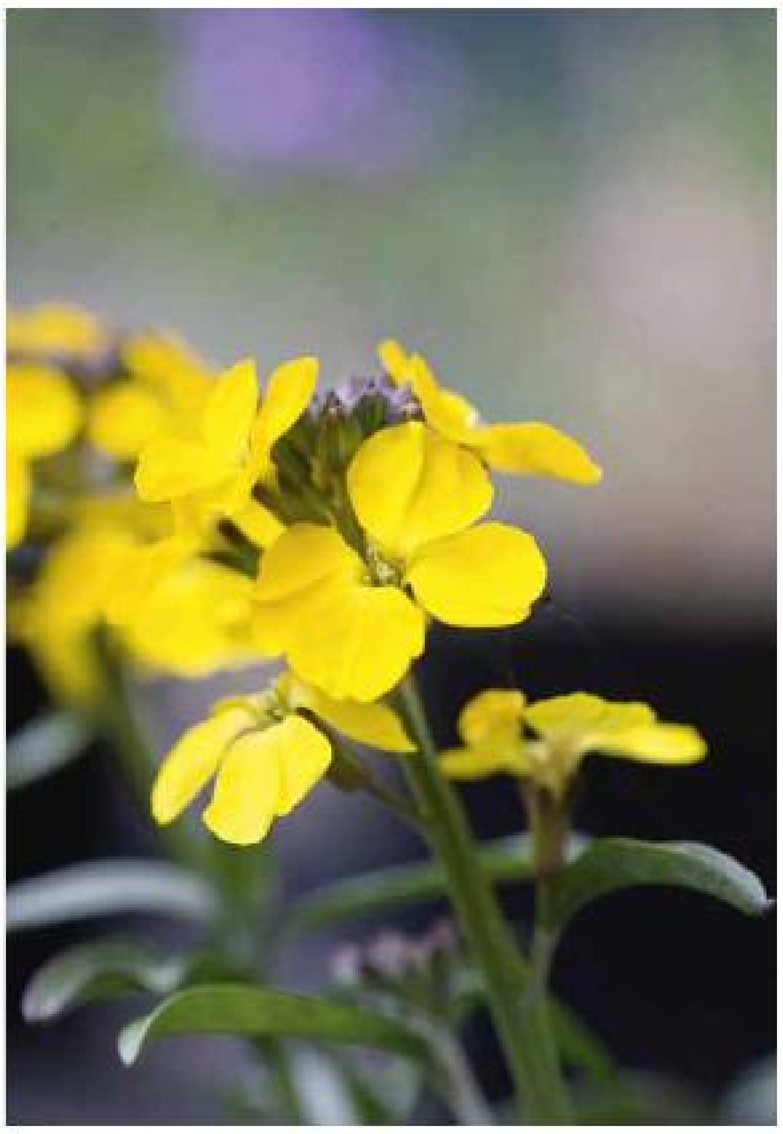
▷ for blistering the skin. I should add that the plant hasn't irritated my skin, nor have I heard of anyone else being affected. However, wallflowers contain a cardiotonic glycoside known as cheiranthin or cheirotoxin, which is a toxic substance.

- Robert Herrick (1591-1674), known as The Cavalier Poet, immortalised the wallflower in verse. He wrote about a tragic accident that occurred at Neidpath Castle on the banks of the River Tweed in Scotland. The Earl of March's daughter, Elizabeth, had fallen in love with a young nobleman from a rival clan, Scott of Tushielaw. Her father wanted her to marry the future king of Scotland instead. The strong-willed Elizabeth refused and her father locked her up in the tower as a punishment. The handsome Scott disguised himself as a minstrel and serenaded her while they made plans to elope, but when the time came Elizabeth fell to her death, landing close to a sprig of wallflower growing along the tower's wall. The broken-hearted Scott set off to wander through the land wearing a sprig of wallflower, and this flower still symbolises faithful devotion.

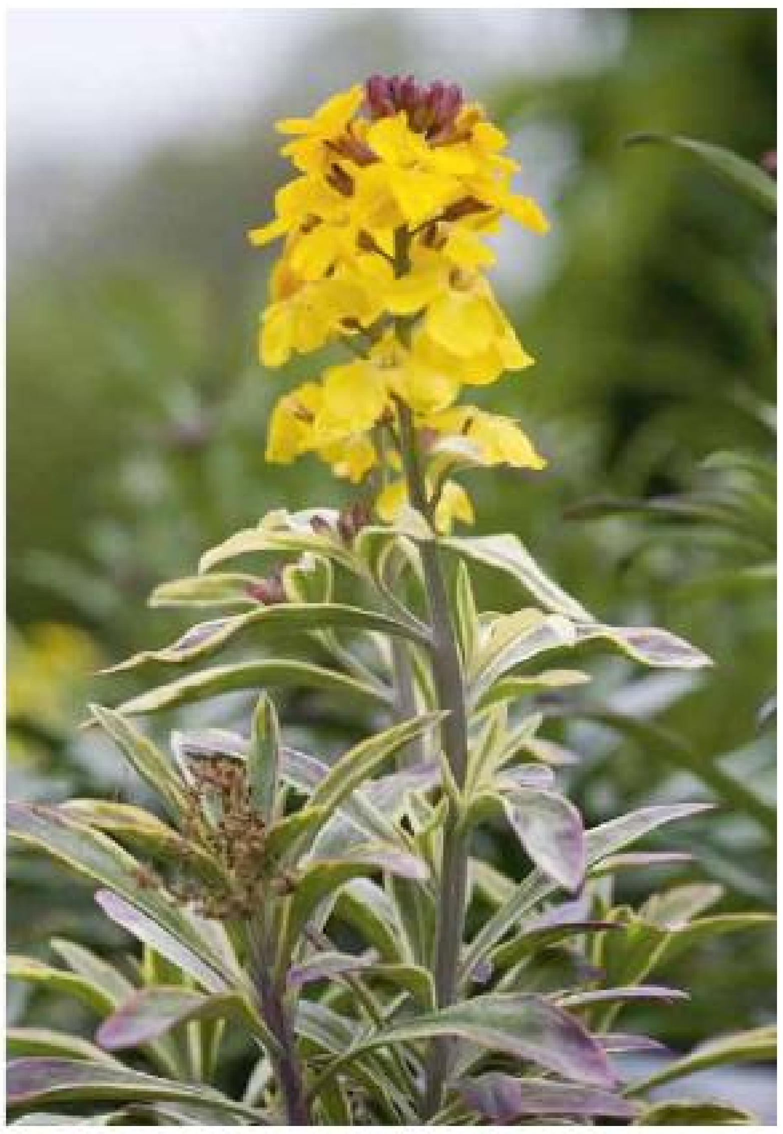
'Up she got upon a wall
Tempting down to slide withal
But the silken twist untied
So she fell, and bruis'd, she died.'
from *How the wall-flower came first, and why so called,* by Robert Herrick.

Where to buy

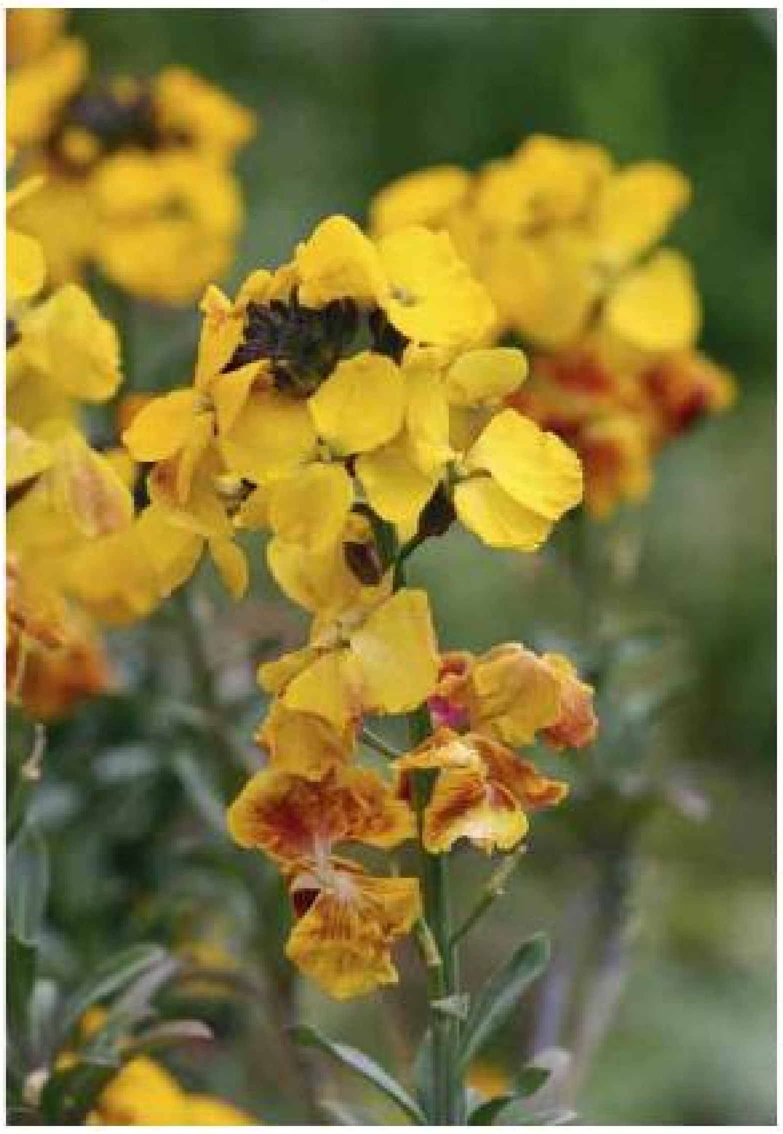
- Hoo House Nursery, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 7DA. Tel 01684 293389, www.hoohouse.plus.com
- Oak Cottage (The Plant Heritage Collection), Dr Simon Weeks, Oak Cottage, Halesworth Road, Walpole, Suffolk IP19 9AZ. Tel 01986 784348, www.erysimums.onesuffolk.net
- Special Plants, Greenways Lane, Cold Ashton, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 8LA. Tel 01225 891686, www.specialplants.net



E. 'BREDON'
A single with large flowers set against the dark-green foliage. This compact plant is a parent for many, including E. Walberton's Fragrant Sunshine = 'Walfrasun'. AGM. RHS H3.

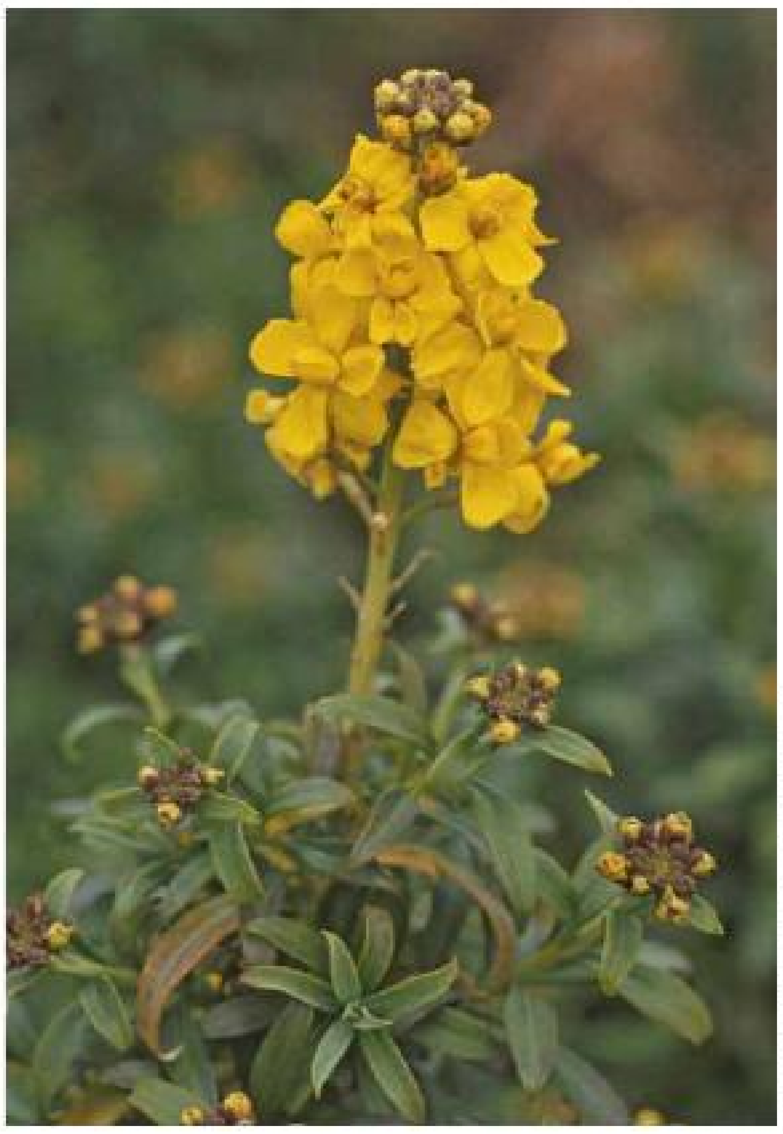


E. WALBERTON'S FRAGRANT STAR = 'WALFRASTAR'
This compact wallflower has variegated leaves with cream edges. It doesn't revert and the bright-yellow flowers, held on a bushy plant, are very fragrant. Sterile so stays in flower for many weeks. USDA 6a-9b.



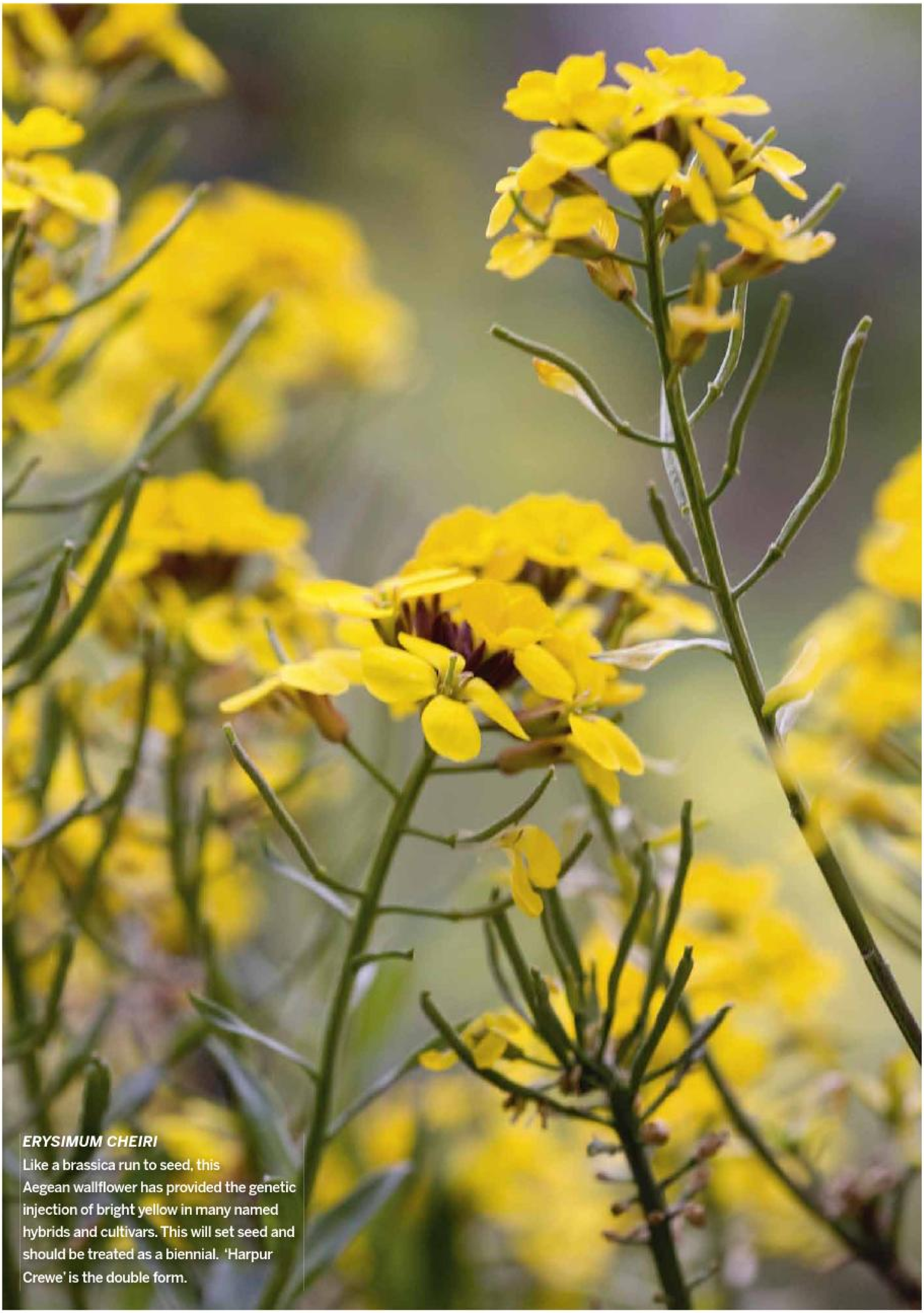
FHF GREENMEDIA / GAP PHOTOS

E. WALBERTON'S FRAGRANT SUNSHINE = 'WALFRASUN'
Widely available compact variety bred by David Tristram of Walberton Nursery near Littlehampton in Sussex. Luminous yellow, scented flowers, often speckled with red when in bud, carried over a long season. It was a rare seedling from 'Bredon'. USDA 8a-9b.



DORLING KINDERSLEY / GETTY IMAGES

E. *CHEIRI* 'HARPUR CREWE'
This very double-yellow is almost certainly an ancient cultivar and very typical of an early double. The flowers are small compared to many other cultivars, but they are a rich, golden yellow and very fragrant. USDA 5a-9b.



ERYSIMUM CHEIRI
Like a brassica run to seed, this Aegean wallflower has provided the genetic injection of bright yellow in many named hybrids and cultivars. This will set seed and should be treated as a biennial. 'Harpur Crewe' is the double form.

James Priest

The English head gardener at Giverny is charged with maintaining the iconic garden that Claude Monet turned into world-renowned art

WORDS **PAULA DEITZ** PORTRAIT **CHARLIE HOPKINSON**

People flock to Giverny, Claude Monet's garden in Normandy, because it was translated into art treasured all over the world. To visit the 4 ½-acre walled garden that flows around the pink-stucco, green-shuttered house and across the road to the iconic water garden is like standing with Monet looking at this or that familiar view. And yet, as every gardener knows, it can never stay the same.

English though he is, James Priest, the head gardener of Giverny since June 2011 – and only the second since the family relinquished the garden in 1966 – has stepped into the role with ease after long experience overseeing the yearly transitions of other noted private gardens in France. He has come a long way from where he was born in Maghull, Lancashire, on New Year's Day 1958, with fond memories of his father's garden, which was half the size of Giverny. When the family gardener retired, each of the children had a section to garden. Observing how well James succeeded, his father urged him on to a career in horticultural studies.

Even before these studies, he was an early Francophile, and he and school friends would travel across to Paris, where for the first time he discovered the wealth of art in museums, vividly recalling the Impressionist paintings. He still returns to the Musée d'Orsay and other galleries periodically to review the Monets, but now with an eye to improving the garden.

Following his time at Myerscough College in Lancashire, he was engaged by a landscape company in the Paris region. And then, after working with both Madame Mallet at Bois des Moutiers ("I'll never forget her elegant lace hat and garden basket") and Princess Sturdza at Le Vasterival ("the richest collection of garden plants in France") in Varengeville-sur-Mer, he returned to England in 1982 to follow courses at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. He also received scholarships, first to collect pine and high altitude plant specimens in Mexico, and later, after completing his studies, to join Dr David Neill, of the Missouri Botanical Garden, in collecting specimens for the Flora Amazonica Project in Ecuador.

For the next 16 years, he oversaw Baron Elie de Rothschild's country gardens at the ancient 250-acre Domaine de Royaumont near Chantilly and has been consulted frequently on developing landscape plans for other important French properties, like the Bagatelle Polo Club de Paris. He is also a familiar presence as a distinguished judge at such plant extravaganzas as Courson's Journées des Plantes. In essence, he is a true example of a man holding steady to his dream, who has risen to the top without losing his dedication or modesty.

While visitors pour into Giverny expecting great flashes and combinations of colours, with an astute eye, James is now editing as the seasons change to unpack the garden and bring out its structural beauty under the myriad arches and wire 'parasols'. Early on Monet, even without a gardener, would plant flowers to paint them alone on a rainy day and, later, whole sections to achieve specific seasonal effects in his compositions – the irises, for example. Now James is accumulating information to discover how to maintain the whole garden according to the cumulative effect achieved by Monet's entire oeuvre relating to the garden.

He does his best thinking, he says, on solitary evening walks in the garden, often standing on the Japanese bridge overlooking the water lily pond. "Here, you are in the paintings," he remarks. Shortly after concluding that overgrown trees were blocking the light inherent in Monet's canvasses of the floating lily pads, the problem was conveniently solved by a ferocious storm that felled three of them. In replanting the Clos Normand section in the main garden, James was inspired by Monet's ability to translate the warmth of reflected light on the façade of Rouen Cathedral at different times of day. Using Monet's palette, James has carried into the garden the pale blues and pinks of early morning, noonday yellows and sunset oranges and reds.

James lives nearby in a charming house of local stone, where he is designing his own walled garden after reacquiring his plants from friends who had 'boarded' them during his move. Here, with more formality, he has arranged his fastigiate yews in an outer circle with an inner one of sage and clipped box around beds of white roses, *Euphorbia characias* and Japanese grasses. A potager in a lower garden is combined with an experimental nursery for future plants in the Monet garden.

With several seasons' experience already behind him, James perceives his mission as "trying to maintain the spirit of Monet without necessarily taking the garden back to his time". He calls this process "a living and evolving art".

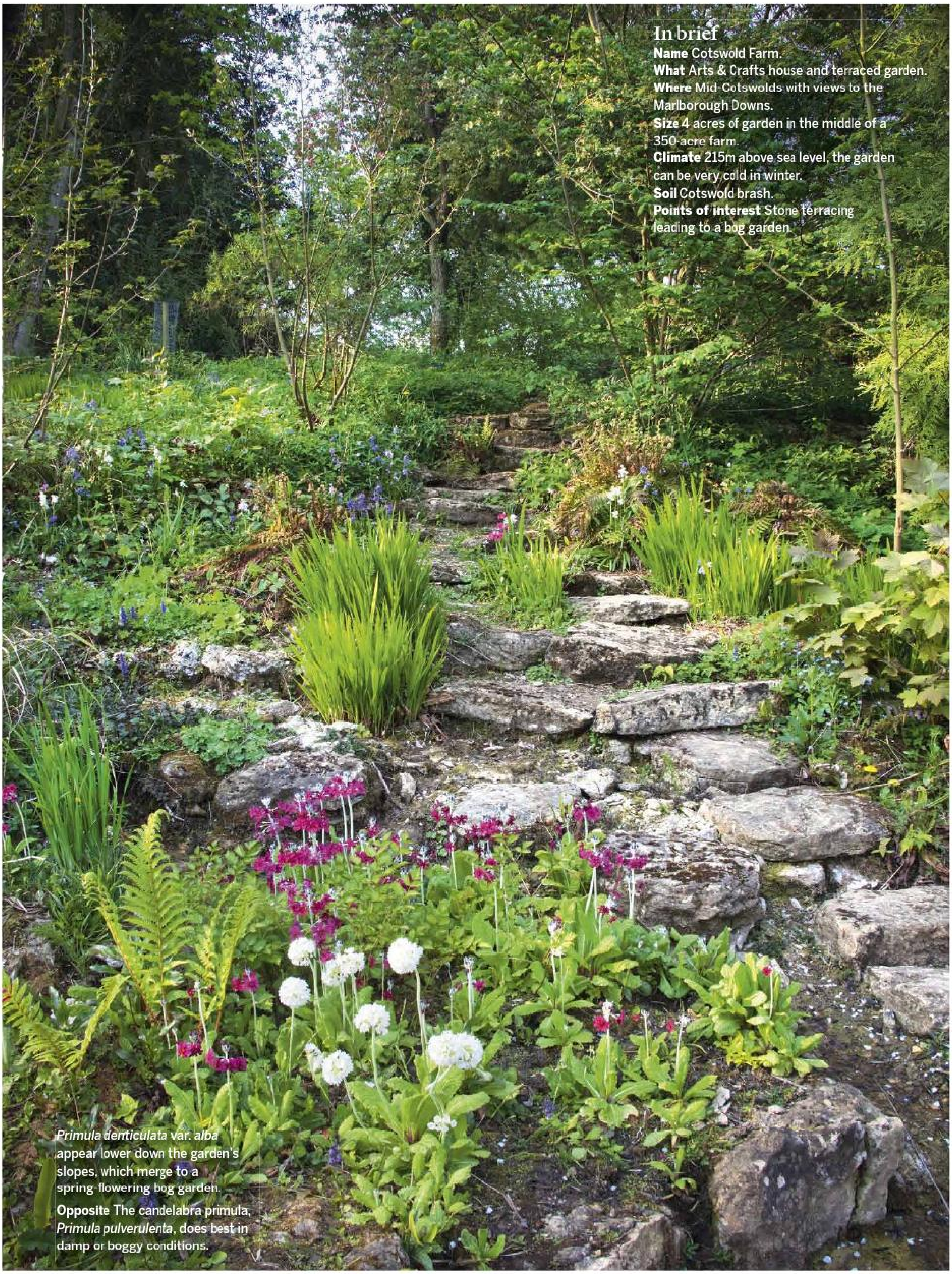
NEXT MONTH Mark Straver, plantsman and nurseryman

Using Monet's palette, James has carried into the garden the pale blues and pinks of early morning, noonday yellow and sunset oranges and reds

Stairway to heaven

A garden can experience changes in fortune through the years, but careful management and the dedication of one volunteer means that this Cotswold garden is currently on a high

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** PHOTOGRAPHS **LYNN KEDDIE**



In brief

Name Cotswold Farm.
What Arts & Crafts house and terraced garden.
Where Mid-Cotswolds with views to the Marlborough Downs.
Size 4 acres of garden in the middle of a 350-acre farm.
Climate 215m above sea level, the garden can be very cold in winter.
Soil Cotswold brash.
Points of interest Stone terracing leading to a bog garden.

Primula denticulata var. *alba* appear lower down the garden's slopes, which merge to a spring-flowering bog garden.

Opposite The candelabra primula, *Primula pulverulenta*, does best in damp or boggy conditions.

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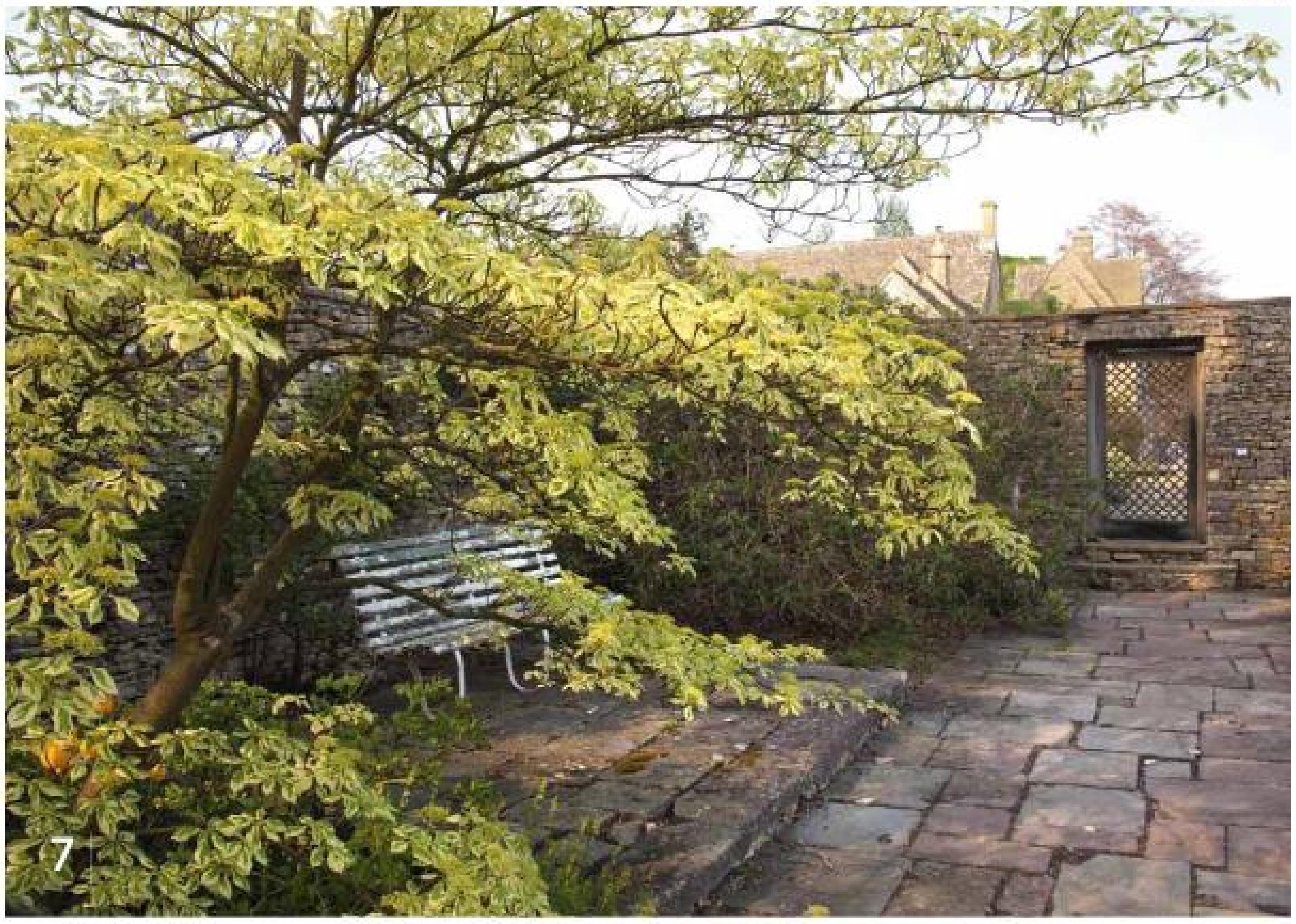
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"The top level is hot and free draining, but with each step down the conditions become cooler and damper"

The house at Cotswold Farm was almost left unfinished. In 1927 money ran out, and a note from its architect Norman Jewson reads: 'I am not sure we can complete.' In fact they did – just – but the garden was not so lucky, and was left to slope dramatically away from the house. It was not until 1934 and a legacy from a relative that this rough ground was civilised with terraces. Jewson was called back in to put into place the levels that now step grandly down from the house, and the walls and steps that frame them.

It makes for a garden of contrasts, according to current owner and gardener Iona Birchall, wife of Mark whose ancestors built the house. "The top level is hot and free draining, but with each step down the conditions become cooler and damper," she says. The formal levels finally dissolve into a fully fledged bog garden at the base of the slope. Like many aristocratic gardens this one has had its ups and downs, and its fortunes have waxed and waned with the economic and social climate. There is a wave of mature planting from the 1930s (a huge *Parrotia*, magnolias, a cornus and a purple sycamore) and another from the 1970s (a 'Kiftsgate' rose that engulfs several apple trees, and a beautiful *Magnolia wilsonii*), but in between each wave of garden focus there was, if not neglect, then a redirecting of resources that saw the garden low on the list of priorities.

Now the garden is being managed beautifully, but very much with current resources in mind. "Once the top terrace would have been planted out with annuals every spring," says Iona, "but now we are making as much as possible permanent." The terrace is filled with tulips, grape hyacinths, chionodoxa and narcissus in spring and becomes a sea of lavender, potentilla and catmint in summer. The once-grand yew barrels have become too large a pruning job and have been chopped to the ground so that they grow into more manageable yew balls. "This is very much a family garden, and we are building on what has been put into place before, but our contribution is partly to cut costs and find ways to manage it without huge inputs of labour," says Iona. It is a story of toning down once-grand expectations for a less lavish age.

Bog garden

Perhaps the feature that has seen the most twists of fortune is the bog garden. Conceived in a fit of grandeur by John Birchall in the 1930s, its creation involved diverting a stream, creating a waterfall and bringing in tons of rock. "And then between the wars it fell into disrepair, just as so many gardens did," says Iona. Attempts were made to rehabilitate it in the 1960s and 1980s, but once again the available resources were inadequate and nature took it back.

And now this area of the garden has undergone a third revival at the hands of Trish Maynard, a tenant in a flat adjoining the house, who has undertaken its maintenance. "That first summer I ▷

1 The middle terrace is filled with long-established trees and shrubs.

2 Two of the garden's original topiary shapes flank the steps to the upper terrace.

3 *Primula japonica* 'Apple Blossom'.

4 The garden's owner, Iona Birchall.

5 Many plants in the garden have appeared as a pleasant surprise, including this *Geum rivale*.

6 A small summer house of Cotswold stone, built by the garden's architect Norman Jewson.

7 *Cornus controversa* 'Variegata' adds elegant structure to the formal terracing.

Primula japonica lines the stepping stones through the bog garden's shady bowers.

> *"I would call it more an obsession than a hobby," Trish says. "I would throw my garden fork and if it hit stone I'd start digging"*

▷ remember trying to machete my way through the bog garden. At some point it struck me that there was a structure under there and I asked if I could investigate it." Being a keen gardener and having no garden of her own, Trish took the bog garden on as her own project. "I would call it more an obsession than a hobby," she says. "I would throw my garden fork and if it hit stone I'd start digging." The ponds were full of silt, a series of 'dwarf' conifers planted in the 1930s had turned into 20-metre monsters, and the pathways were buried under 15cm of heavy, matted sedge grasses. The structure that slowly began to reveal itself was a series of stepping stone paths. "It was so difficult to work. It was impossible to get the wheelbarrow across the stones, so these heavy, soggy roots had to be put into a basket and dragged away, balancing over stepping stones. I fell on my backside many times." All of the stones used in the creation of the garden were quarried on the land, and Trish even barrowed vast wheelbarrow-sized stones from the quarry to fill in missing paths.

Iona was delighted that Trish wanted to take the project on, but warned her from the start that there was no budget. "So every plant here has been begged, borrowed and not quite stolen," says Trish. In spring the bog is filled with candelabra primulas that emerged after clearing, arum lilies donated by a local garden, and trilliums filched from another part of the garden.

Being a bit of a one-woman band, and with so few resources available, Trish is ever aware that the bog garden could slip back into its former state. "The problem I battle is mare's tail. It's impossible to remove effectively as the roots are so deep. In spring they haven't emerged yet and it looks wonderful, but by summer nature has started to claim the bog garden back again." Throughout its history, the bog garden has seemed destined to be fully enjoyed only for brief periods, but thanks to Trish this is very much one of them. □

FURTHER INFORMATION

Address Cotswold Farm, nr Duntisbourne Abbots, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 7JS.
Contact Mrs Iona Birchall.
Tel 01285 821857.
Web www.cotswoldfarmgardens.org.uk
Open 9 & 12 June, 2013, 2-6pm (www.ngs.org.uk), or by appointment.

8 of Trish's favourite bog plants

1 *Trollius europaeus*
This is one of the original plantings that lurked beneath the growth. "I dug this out of a clump of ground elder and I love its big yellow ball flowers," says Trish. "It has clumped up beautifully." USDA 3a-9b[‡].

2 *Trillium chloropetalum*
Sourced from elsewhere in the garden, this deep pink trillium is slowly but happily bulking up in the moist and shady conditions. USDA 4a-9b.

3 *Primula bulleyana*
This candelabra primula is another of the original plants that emerged after clearing. The flowers start yellow and turn to orange, and have a lovely scent. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b.

4 *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*
This plant also emerged from the undergrowth, common spotted orchids have started to clump up and make their presence felt in the bog garden in summer. RHS H4.

5 Trish Maynard is a tenant of the Birchalls' who has taken on the bog garden as her own project.

6 *Primula denticulata* var. *alba*
Because of the limited budget very few plants have been bought in, and these delicate white drumstick primulas were donated by nearby Colesbourne Park.

7 *Hosta*
A big, tough unnamed hosta was in the bog garden already and does spectacularly well there, rarely being eaten by anything.

8 *Rodgersia pinnata*
Sourced from another part of the garden, Trish loves the deep bronze leaves. "A stately plant," she says. RHS H4, USDA 4a-7b.

9 *Hemerocallis lilioasphodelus*
Not such a feature of the spring garden, but in summer the garden is filled with day lilies, donated by Colesbourne Park. AGM.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
[‡] Hardiness ratings given where available.

3 NATURAL VISIONS / ALAMY 5 TREVOR SIMS / GARDEN WORLD IMAGES

Strength in depth

The owners of this garden in northern Germany plan carefully for glorious colour to start the year with impact

WORDS VAL BOURNE PHOTOGRAPHS PHILIPPE PERDEREAU

Below Daffodils of every type come together under *Magnolia* x *loebneri* 'Leonard Messel' in one glorious flourish, often appearing with the tulips – something that's rare in Britain.

Right This garden has had problems with box blight, so all the box plants are trimmed in winter. In spring they quickly take on pale-green fuzzy new growth.

In brief

Name Lucenz-Bender garden
What Country garden with colour-themed borders from early spring to late autumn.
Where Just over the German border from the Netherlands at Bedburg-Hau.
Size One acre.
Climate Cold winters, sometimes with snow, followed by ambient spring with little frost. Autumns are often warm too.
Soil Rich and heavily improved by well-rotted cow manure.
Points of interest Spring bulbs in colour-themed displays, textured hard landscaping and structural trees and hedges, which create intimacy.

Visiting the Lucenz-Bender garden on a spring day, when the magnolias, hyacinths and tulips are in full sway, is an energising experience. You can feel spring bursting through in this rural part of Germany, just over the border from the Netherlands. Frosts normally finish at the end of March here and rarely spoil the spring show, and the rich, low-lying pastureland set round Bedburg-Hau is perfect for bulbs. The local dairy cattle provide plenty of manure so by spring this garden is fuelled and raring to go. The local weather seems to concertina spring flowers into one glorious burst, with narcissi flowering just before the tulips.

The one-acre garden, now owned by Manfred Lucenz and Klaus Bender, has been in Manfred's family since 1901 – he was born here in 1948. "It's a windy area but we were lucky that there were already established hedges sheltering the house and garden," Klaus says. "We started our garden in 1984 and a well-known garden architect, Elizabeth Renner, laid out the original plan." Their first joint project was a white garden, "although we knew nothing about Sissinghurst then," says Klaus. "We got the idea after reading letters written by Virginia Woolf to Vita Sackville-West." In the 1990s they visited Sissinghurst, also taking in plenty of NGS *Yellow Book* gardens.

Elizabeth Renner also designed the pond and laid pathways to create "little compartments," as Klaus calls them. The straight paths add structure and texture and make the garden seem much ▷

▷ larger than it is. Some are made of bricks laid at right angles to create zigzag patterns. Others are of stone, pebbles or gravel. Further structure is provided by evergreen hedges and box shapes, which appear throughout the garden; "Although box blight has been a problem," Klaus admits. They now cut the box in winter, when temperatures are cooler, in order to prevent the fungus from spreading further. By April the new growth is beginning to break, creating fuzzy rich-green outlines, and this matches the exuberance of the bulb lawns, where narcissi are naturalised in thick swathes.

Benches and seats in the outer reaches of the garden have a rustic simplicity, together with paling fences of chestnut wood. Closer to the house there's more formality. Low walls create separate areas and the focus is a sunny courtyard decorated with geometric mosaics set in a painted white wall.

Magnolia flowers float above this garden like swansdown, though Klaus and Manfred only began to plant them recently. Klaus selects *Magnolia* x *loebneri* 'Leonard Messel' as a particular favourite for its frost-resistant flowers. They also admire *M. liliiflora* 'Nigra' and *M.* x *soulangeana* 'Lennei'.

Having lots of compartments, or garden rooms, encouraged Klaus and Manfred to use different colours in different areas. In every case the colour theme extends into summer and autumn. Dahlias, clematis, lavender, irises and many roses keep the show going until late in the year.

Left Formal areas contain stone troughs full of bulbs. Simple wooden fences separate formal areas from the more rustic.

Centre The *Fritillaria imperialis* 'Lutea' was planted in the Yellow Garden decades ago.

Right Magnolias feature heavily and rarely get frosted. Here their cool two-tone pink flowers float above the lovely foliage and elegant wands of *Bergenia cordifolia*.

"Dahlias, clematis, lavender, irises and many roses keep the show going until late in the year"

Containers of bulbs, usually single kinds in one pot, are carefully placed around the garden. In the courtyard large tubs of the lily-flowered pink tulip 'Mariette' echo the mophead trees. Blue hyacinths are planted in long, narrow tubs, sometimes in grey stone and sometimes in lead. Brown salt glazeware, terracotta and glazed earthenware are also used. Some larger urns, which originally came from France, are also painted cobalt blue, adding extra style. However it's the level of constant love and care in the Lucenz-Bender garden, along with creative planting schemes for every season, that prompt garden visitors and camera crews alike to return year after year to this plant paradise. □

• Turn the page for Klaus's tips on growing tulips and a selection of his favourite bulbs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Mühlenstrasse 6, 47551 Bedburg-Hau, Germany.
Tel +49 (0)28 21 60270. **Website** www.lucenz-bender.de
Open 31 March-1 April, 13-14 April, 20-21 April, 4-5 May, 18-19 May, 1-2 June, 15-16 June, 13-14 July, 7-8 September. 11am-6pm. Entrance €3.

Klaus's advice on growing tulips

Tulip fire is a risk if tulips are grown in the same ground year after year. This contagious fungal disease, caused by *Botrytis tulipae*, stunts the blooms and produces grey lesions on the leaves. If tulip fire occurs, avoid growing bulbs in the infected area for three years. To reduce risk, plant bulbs in cold weather, either in November or December, and remove bulbs every year immediately after flowering.

All the tulips and many of the other bulbs grown in the garden are planted in plastic pots, which are plunged into the ground in early spring, and then lifted to overwinter inside the barn. Using pots makes bulbs easy to remove after flowering, and prevents direct contact with the soil and the risk of tulip fire.

Klaus uses soil from the vegetable garden or a mixture of sand and soil, not compost kept in plastic bags, when potting as he feels garden soil is healthier. The bulbs are not fed with fertiliser or manure.

Klaus often mixes toning varieties in the same pot to create a confetti ripple effect. One of his favourite tulip recipes contains the early pink double 'Peach Blossom' and 'Holland Princess' together with the deep-purple 'Recreado'.

The tulips lining the path have been grown in pots using a blend of pink, purple and cool-mauve varieties.

9 favourite spring bulbs

1 *Tulipa* 'Apricot Beauty'
A pearly, soft apricot, single, early tulip – excellent planted on its own, or against blues. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 3a-7b[†].

2 *Tulipa* 'Purissima'
This gapes widely in sun, gradually turning from ivory-white to clotted cream. Fantastic with box. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 3a-7b.

3 *Narcissus* 'Carlton'
Good for naturalising with a robust habit and large vivid yellow flowers. Clumps very well in good soil. AGM.

4 *Narcissus* 'St Patrick's Day'
A yellow fully formed daffodil with a flared trumpet, fading to cream. USDA 3a-8b.

5 *Crocus* 'Prins Claus'
In full sun they are white, but in shade they show their purple backs. USDA 4a-11.

6 *Narcissus* 'Ice Follies'
The full-white outers are middled in a lemon-yellow crown. Ages to cream. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.

7 *Tulipa* 'White Triumphator'
The classic lily-flowered white tulip for a cool elegant scheme or a white garden. It flowers in early May, reaching 60cm. Unbeatable. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 3a-8b.

8 *Fritillaria imperialis* 'Lutea'
This is a centrepiece in the Yellow Garden, having naturalised in the rich soil, helped on by regular manure mulches. USDA 5a-8b.

9 *Tulipa* 'Menton'
Produces large oval eggs with iridescent petals that hover somewhere between apricot and pink, like shot silk. AGM. USDA 3a-9b.

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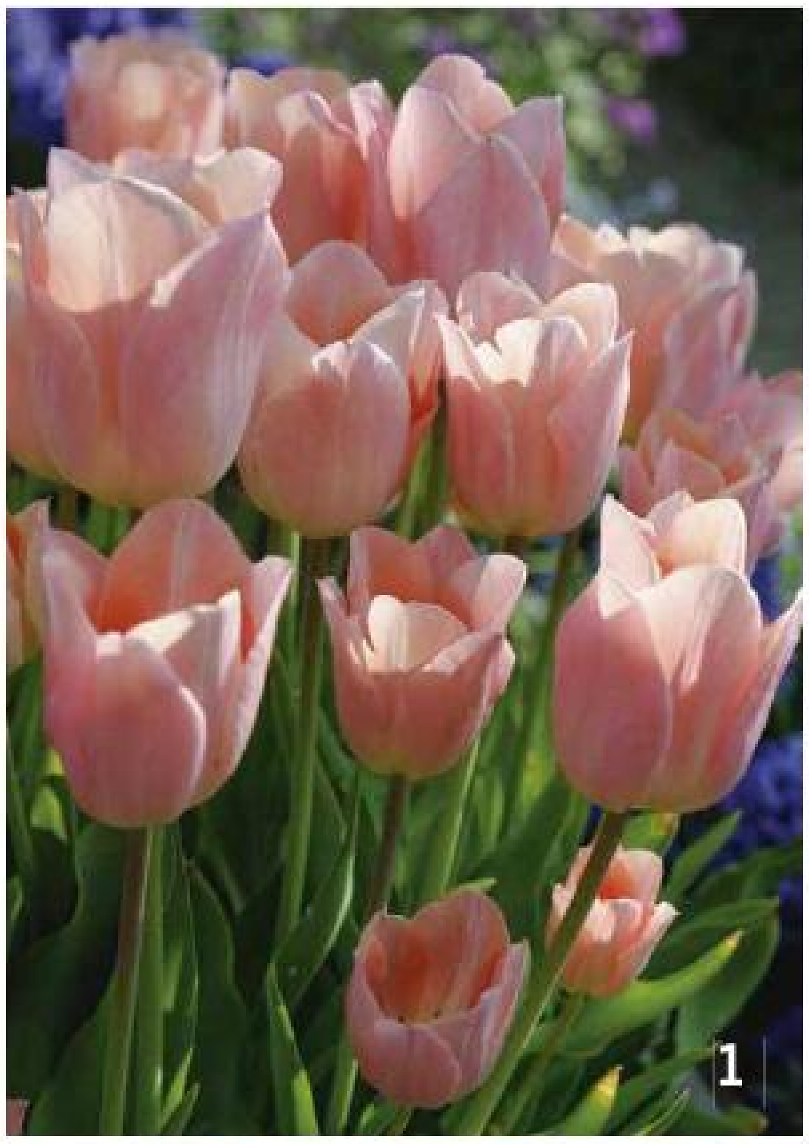
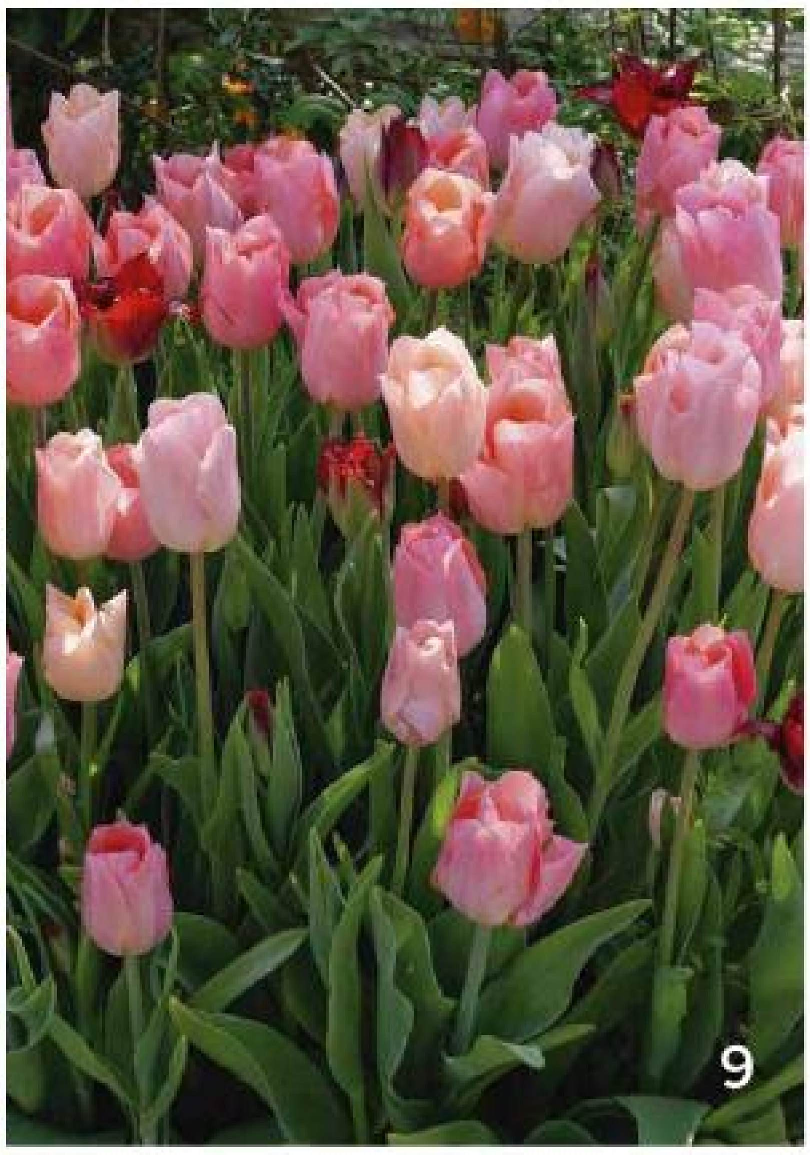
[†]Hardiness ratings given where available.





2 ELKE BORKOWSKI / GAP PHOTOS, 3 FREDERIC DIDILLON / GAP PHOTOS, 4 GRAHAM PRENTICE / ALAMY, 5 TORIE CHUGG / THE GARDEN COLLECTION, 6 ELKE BORKOWSKI / GAP PHOTOS

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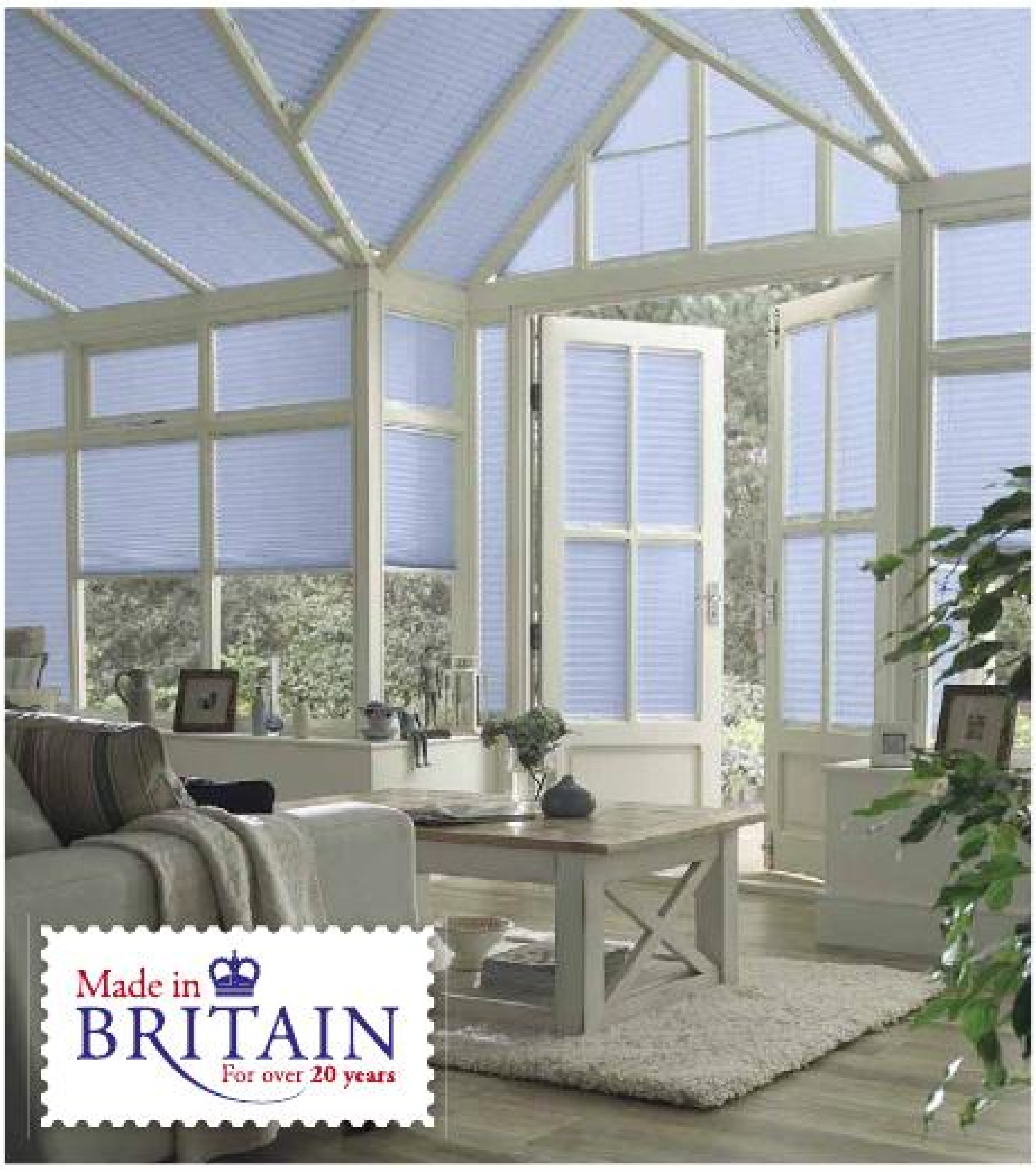

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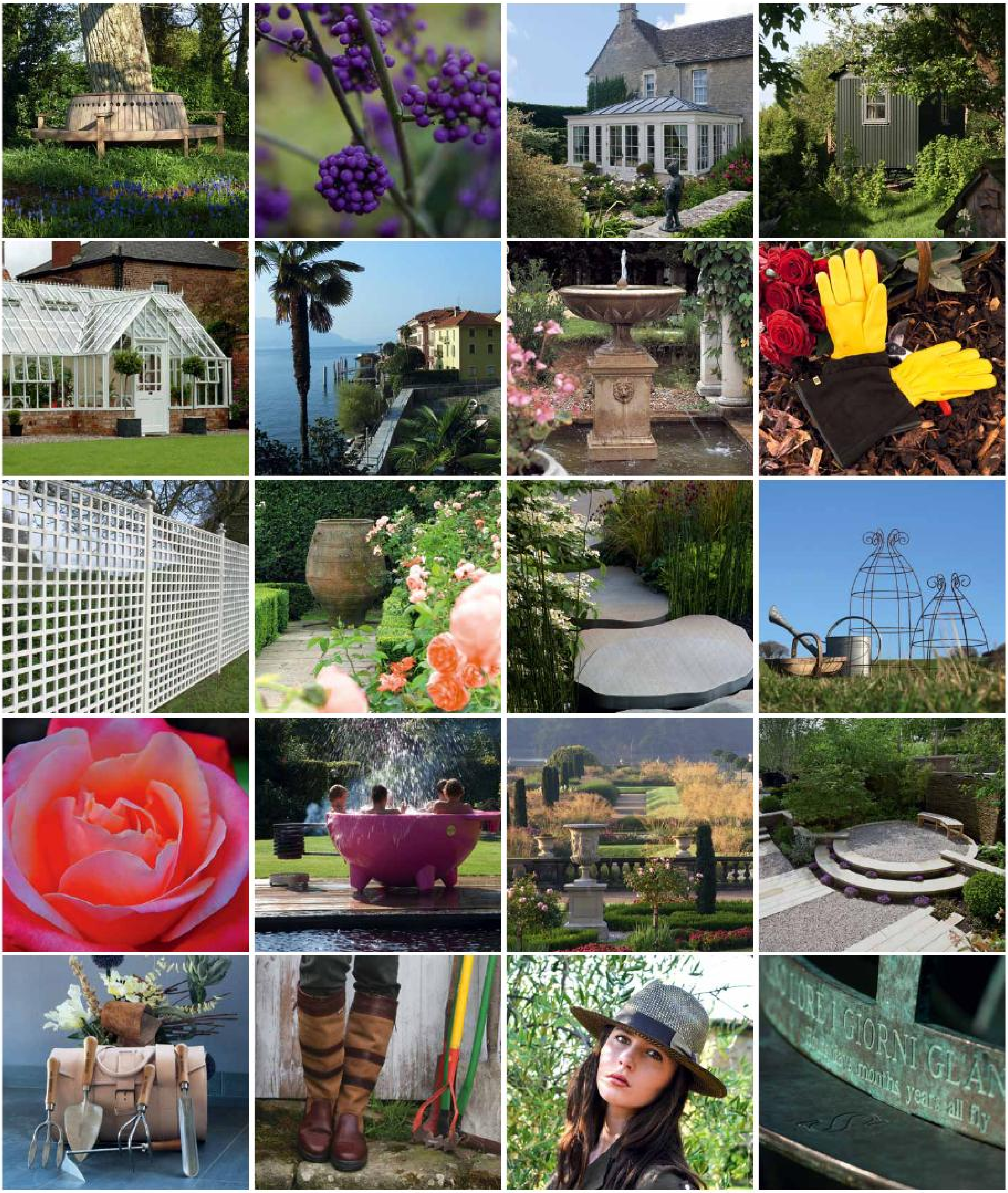
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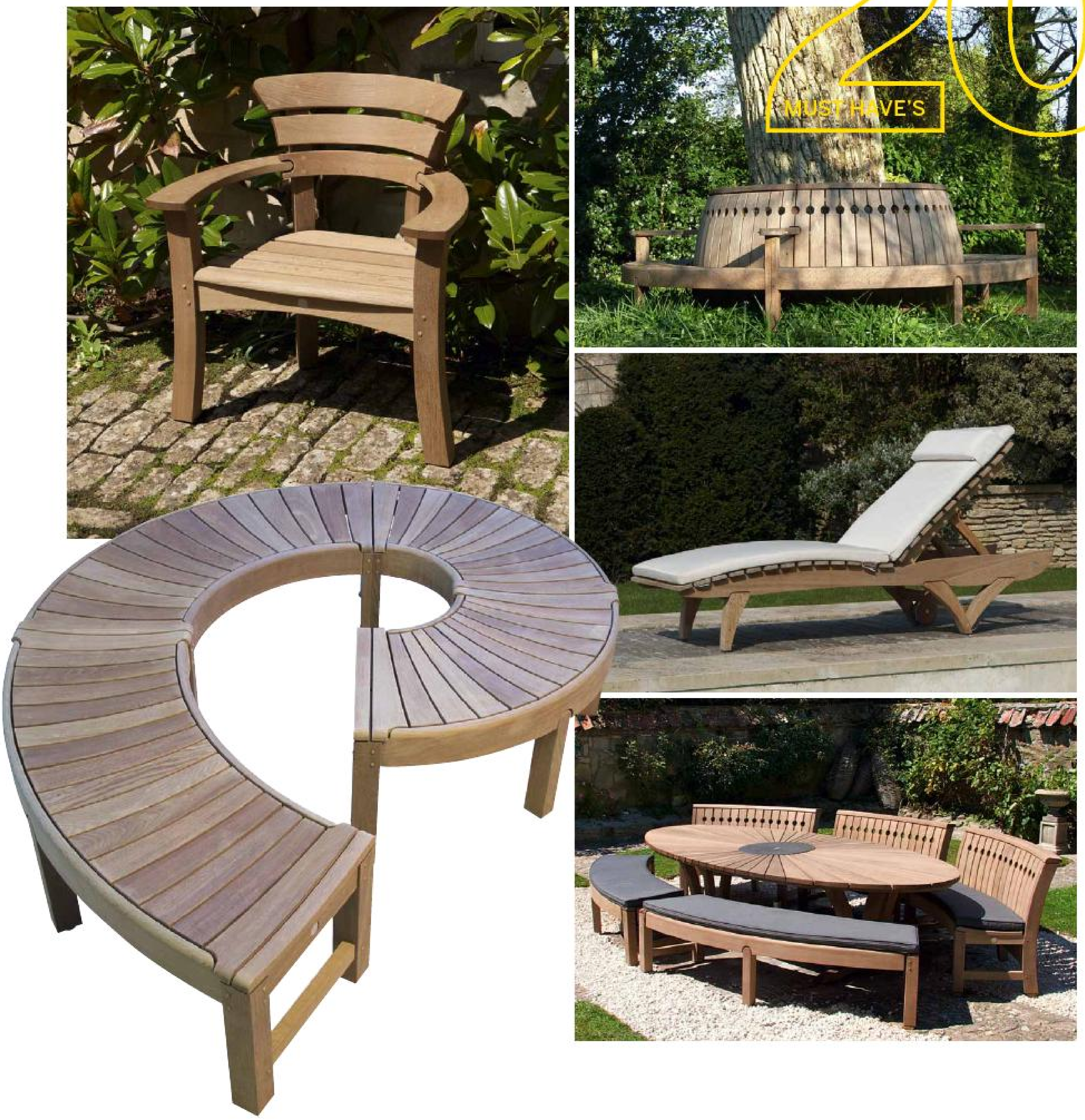

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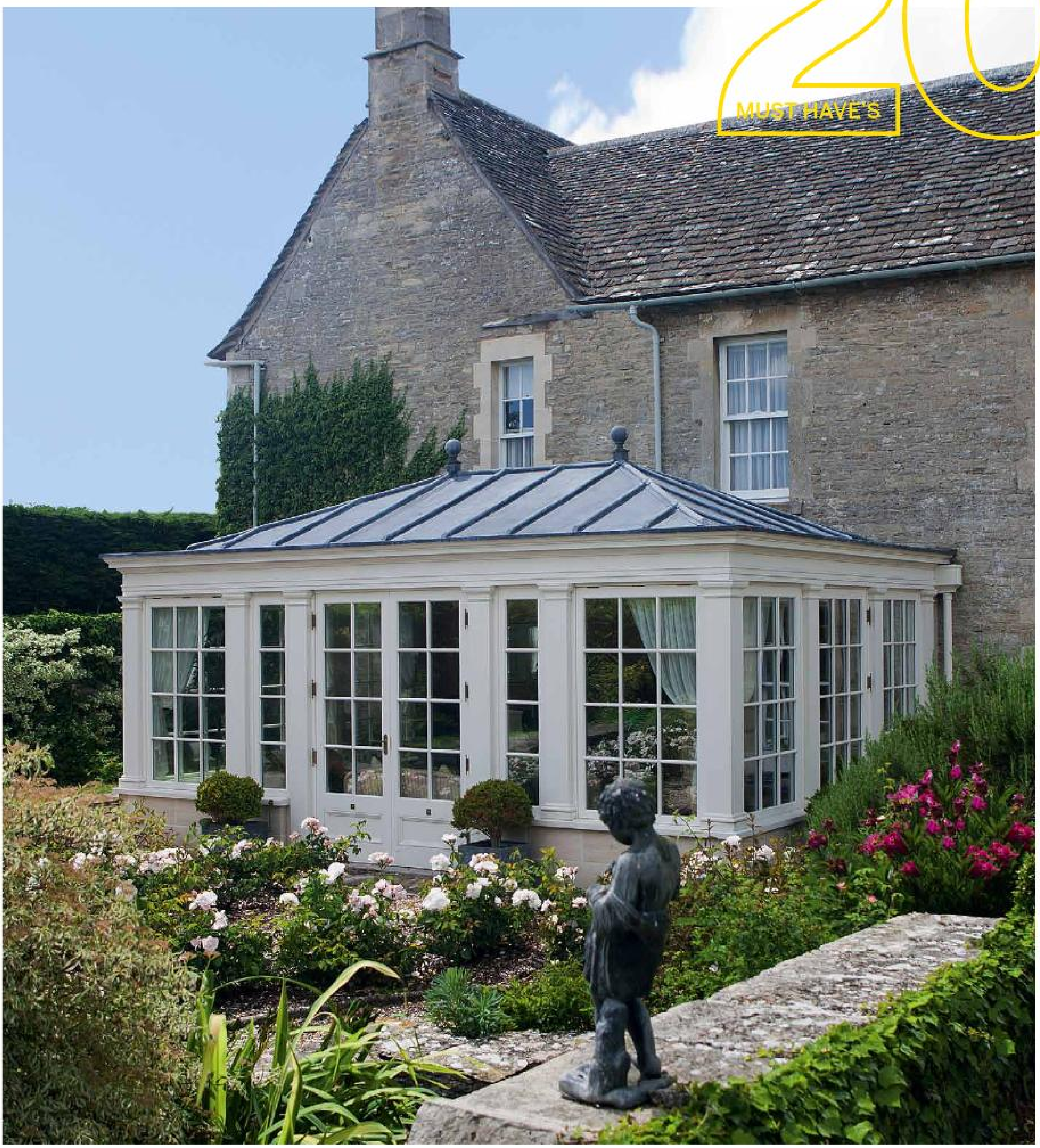

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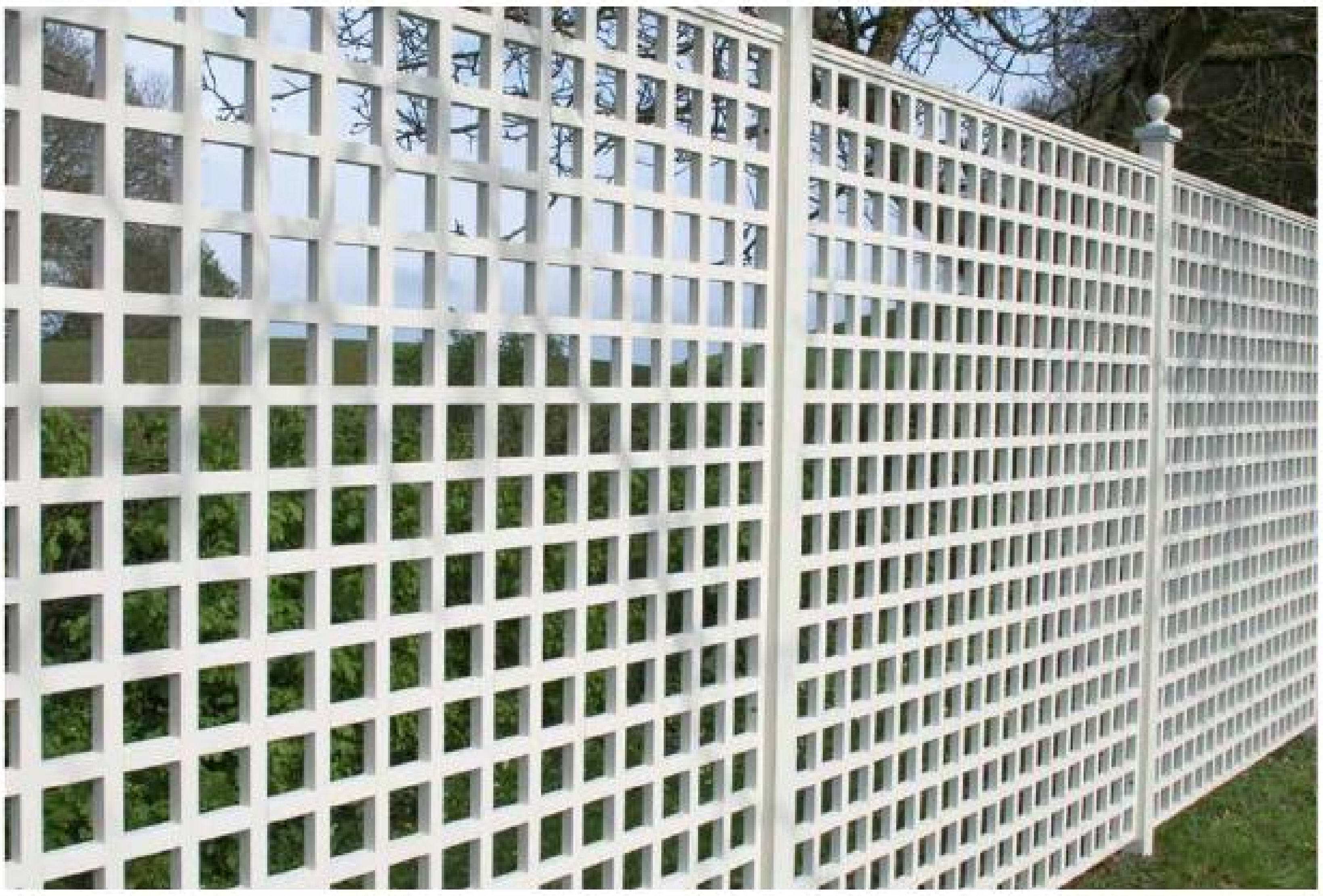

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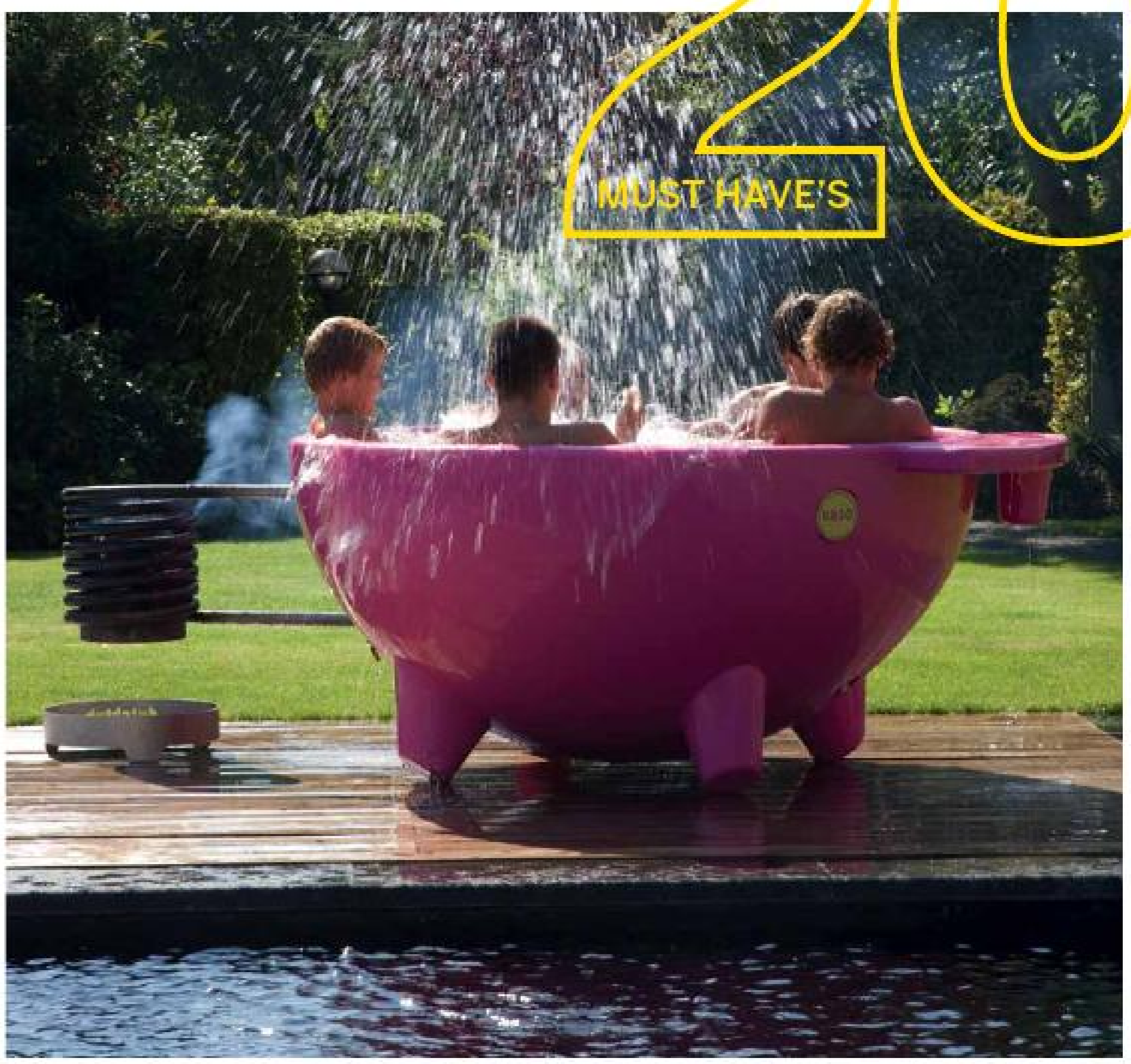

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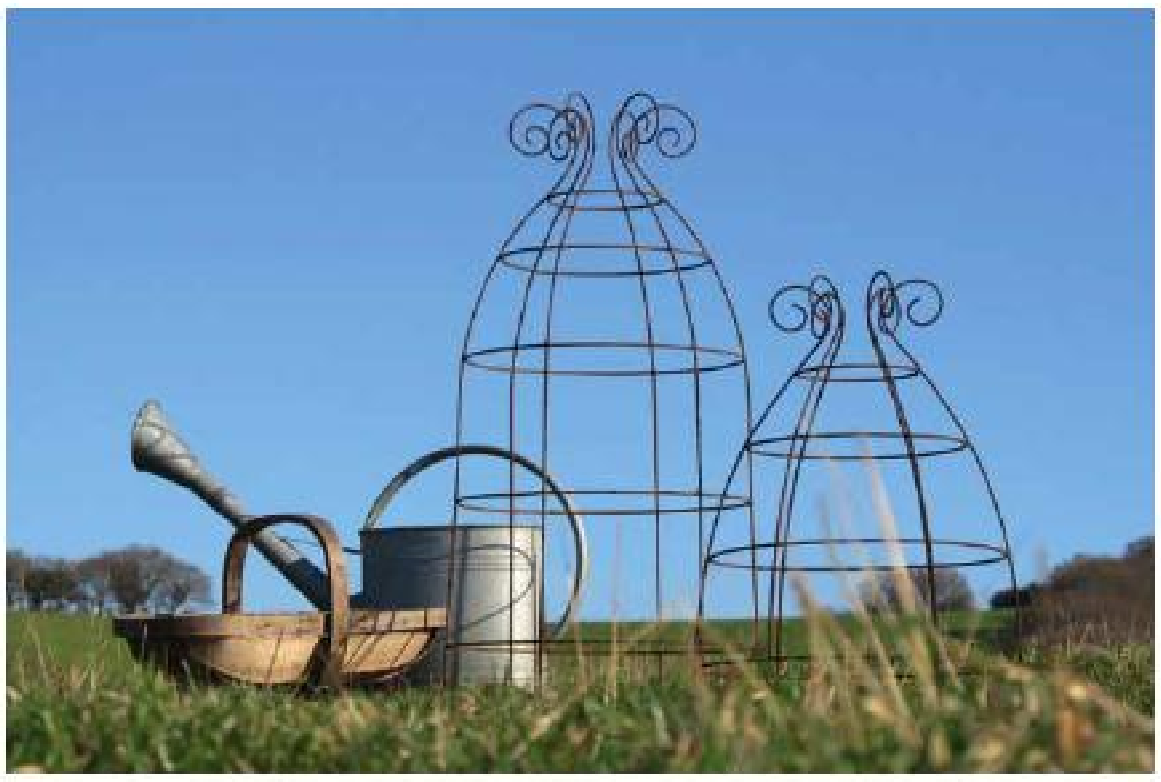

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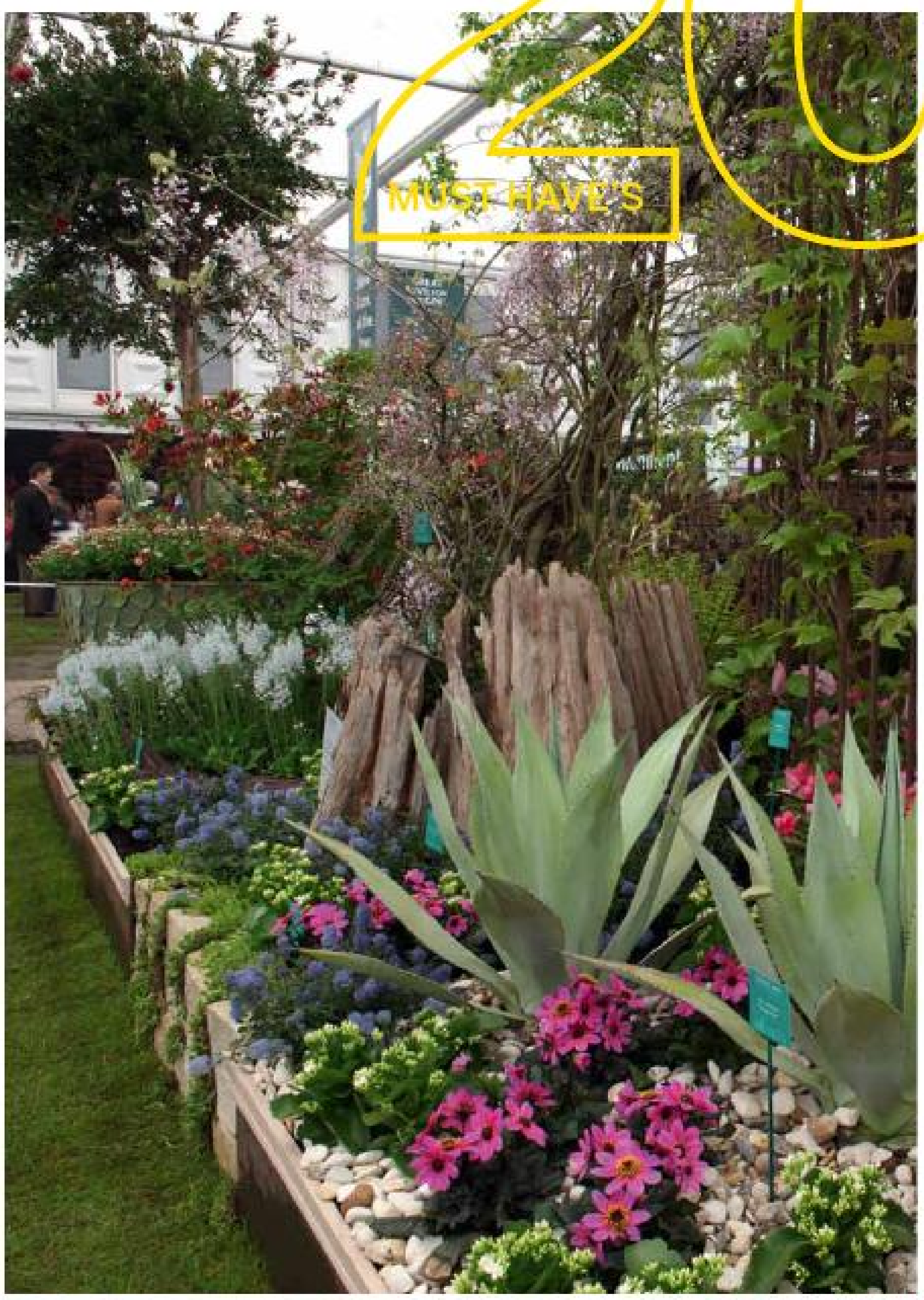

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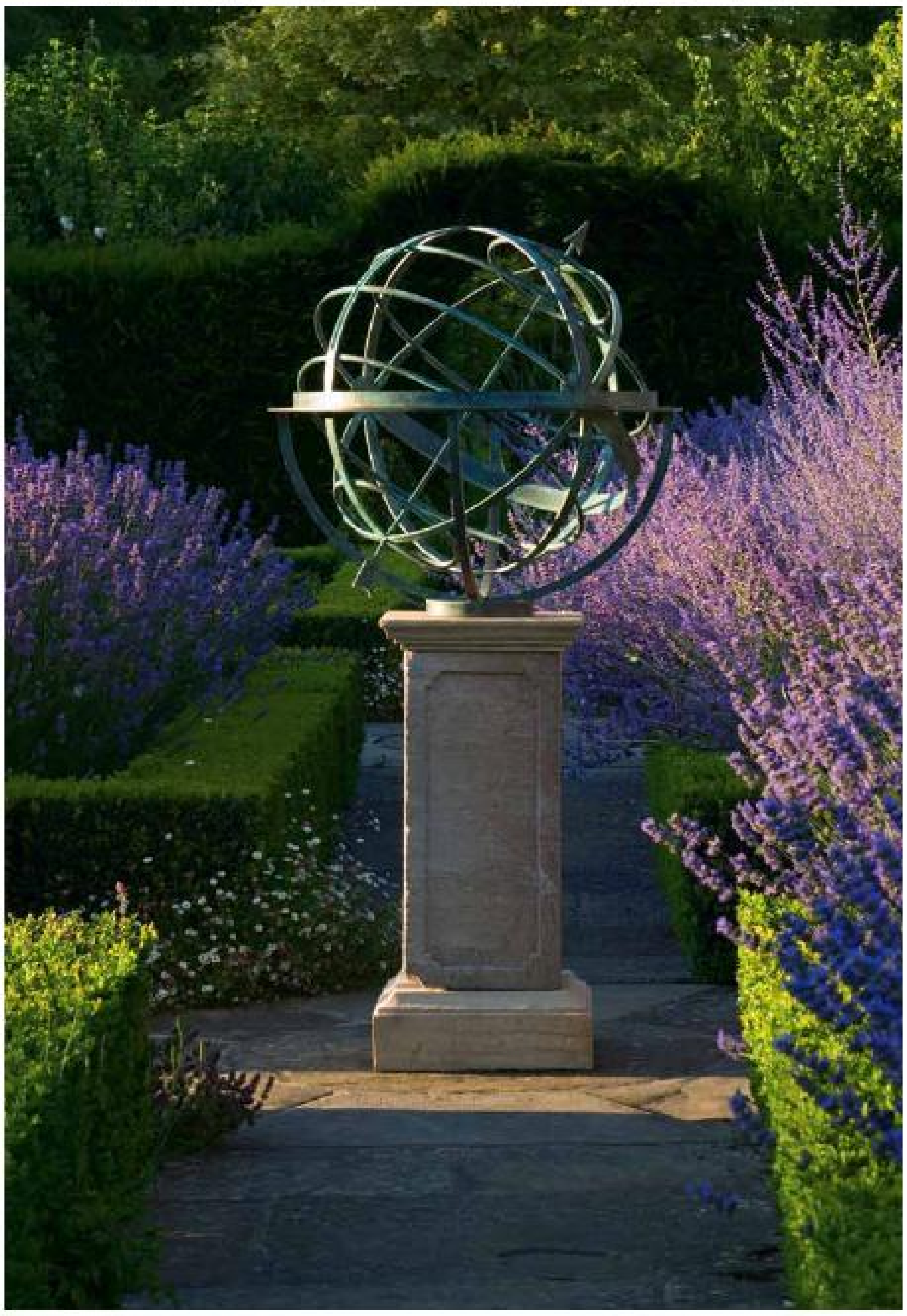

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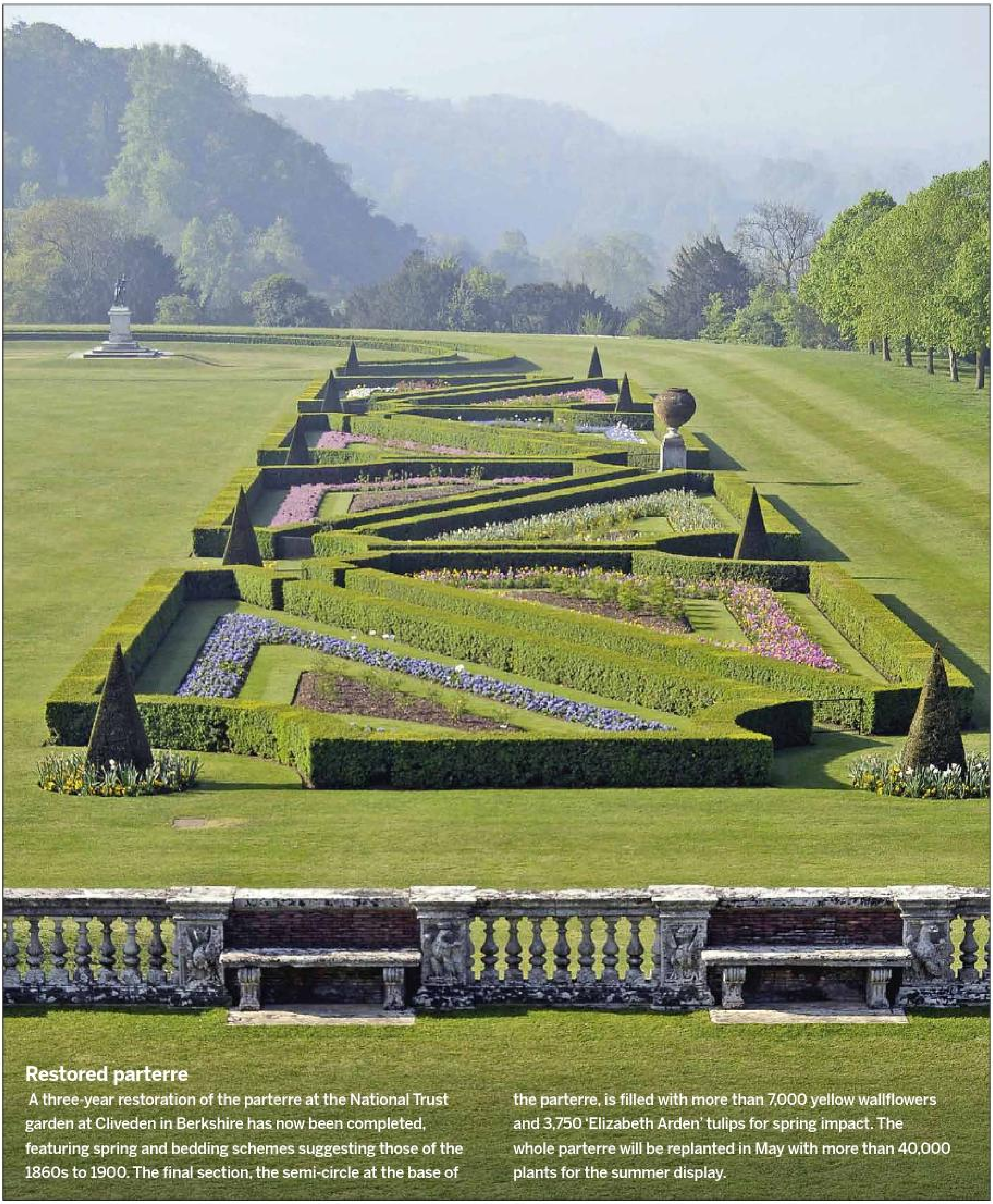

Restored parterre

A three-year restoration of the parterre at the National Trust garden at Cliveden in Berkshire has now been completed, featuring spring and bedding schemes suggesting those of the 1860s to 1900. The final section, the semi-circle at the base of the parterre, is filled with more than 7,000 yellow wallflowers and 3,750 'Elizabeth Arden' tulips for spring impact. The whole parterre will be replanted in May with more than 40,000 plants for the summer display.

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12"/30cm	~~£44~~ £39	~~£46~~ £43	~~£62~~ £56
18"/45cm	~~£66~~ £59	~~£73~~ £66	~~£90~~ £81
Optional Capping	~~£12~~ £10	~~£13~~ £11	~~£15~~ £13

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12"/30cm	~~£74~~ £67	~~£88~~ £79	~~£104~~ £94
18"/45cm	~~£113~~ £102	~~£132~~ £119	~~£158~~ £143
Optional Capping	~~£15~~ £13	~~£19~~ £17	~~£24~~ £21

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News

COMPILED BY **ANNIE GATTI**

LIONEL SMITH

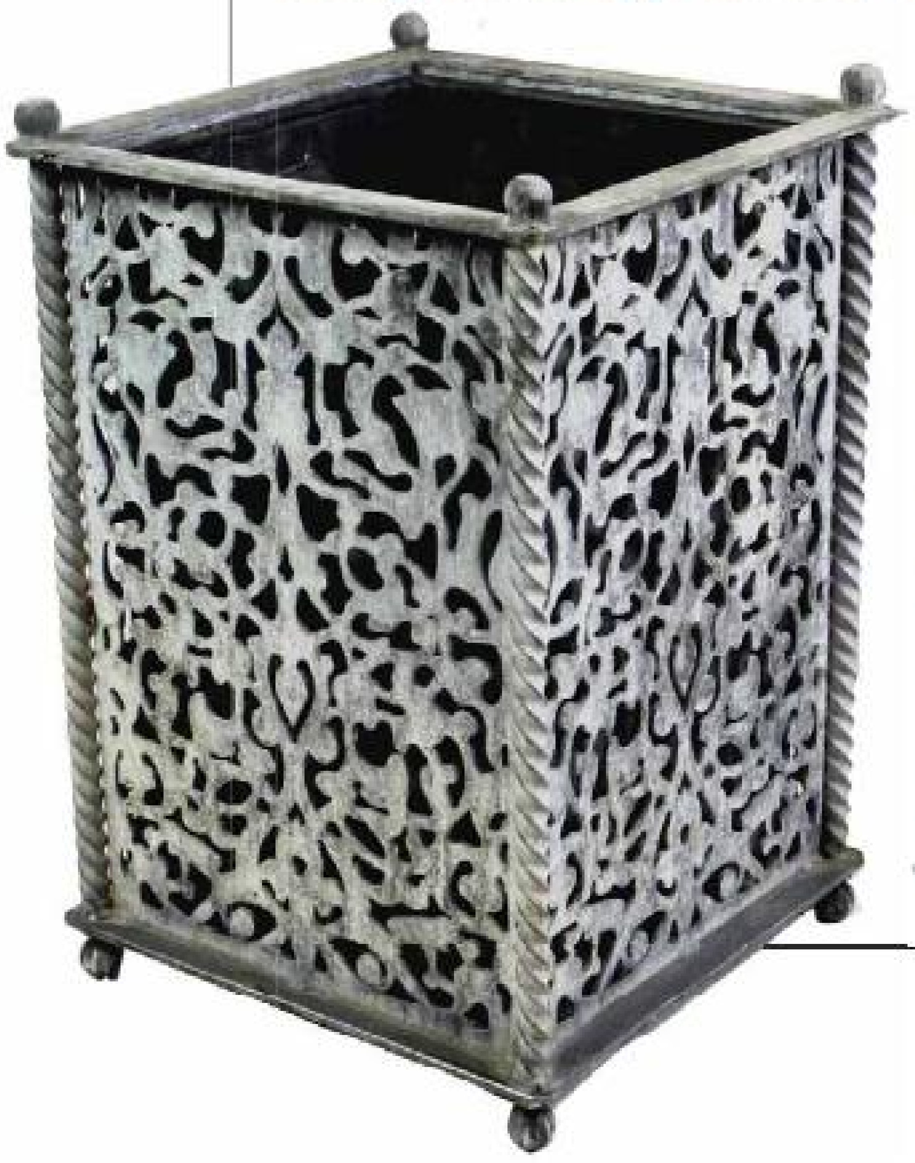
LAWN TRIAL

Flowers replace grass

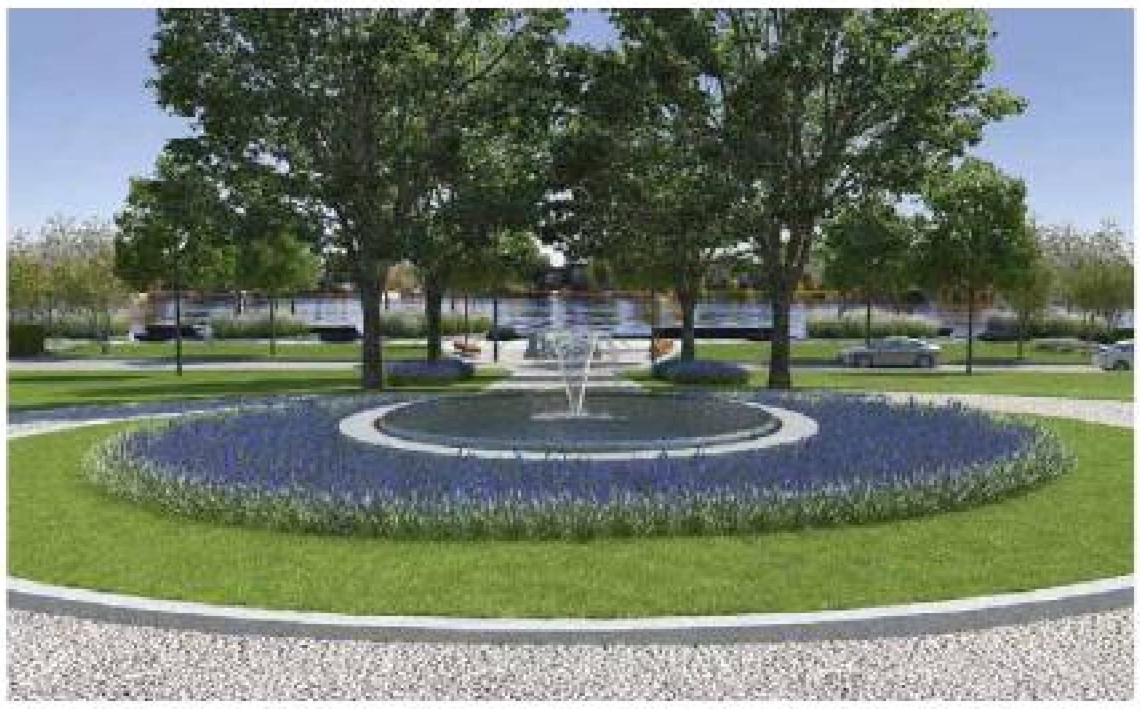
A small Victorian park in Notting Hill, London is the site of an exciting trial to replace the traditional lawn with a grass-free flowery one. Some 220 square metres at Avondale Park is being planted with a variety of mainly spring and summer flowering species such as English daisies, buttercups, germander speedwell, azure bluets (*Houstonia caerulea*), heartsease and lilac-blue creeping *Mazus*. These trial swards, grown by RHS-supported PhD student Lionel Smith at Reading University, are grown from a mix of seed and cutting raised plants. Compared to traditional lawns, they need about half the amount of mowing and no additional fertilisers, watering or pest and disease control.

STEEL PLANTER

Artist blacksmith Andrew Findlay has created a statement planter, forged from steel and galvanised in zinc to protect it from the elements. The filigree-like panels, with an antique lead appearance, belie the sturdiness of this eye-catching square container, which would be handsomely offset by a clipped evergreen to provide all-year interest at the entrance to the house.



58cm high, 41cm wide; £450. Tel 01531 634999; www.andrew-findlay.com



URBAN LANDSCAPING

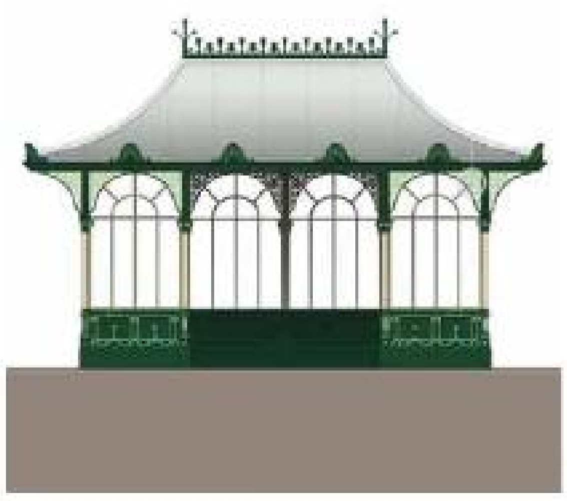
Swedish park project

Landscape architect Ulf Nordfjell, who is making his third show garden for Chelsea this year, is leading a project in his native Sweden to upgrade the Rådhusparken city centre park in Umeå. A new urban landscape featuring granite and black wooden decking will link the historic park to the riverbank. A central water feature is framed with flower beds, which will be filled with some 15,000 perennials and grasses sourced from Hampshire nursery Hortus Loci. The project, involving Ramboll Landscape and Plan Stockholm, will be completed for 2014 when Umeå becomes European Capital of Culture.

CITY LIVING

Rooftop edibles

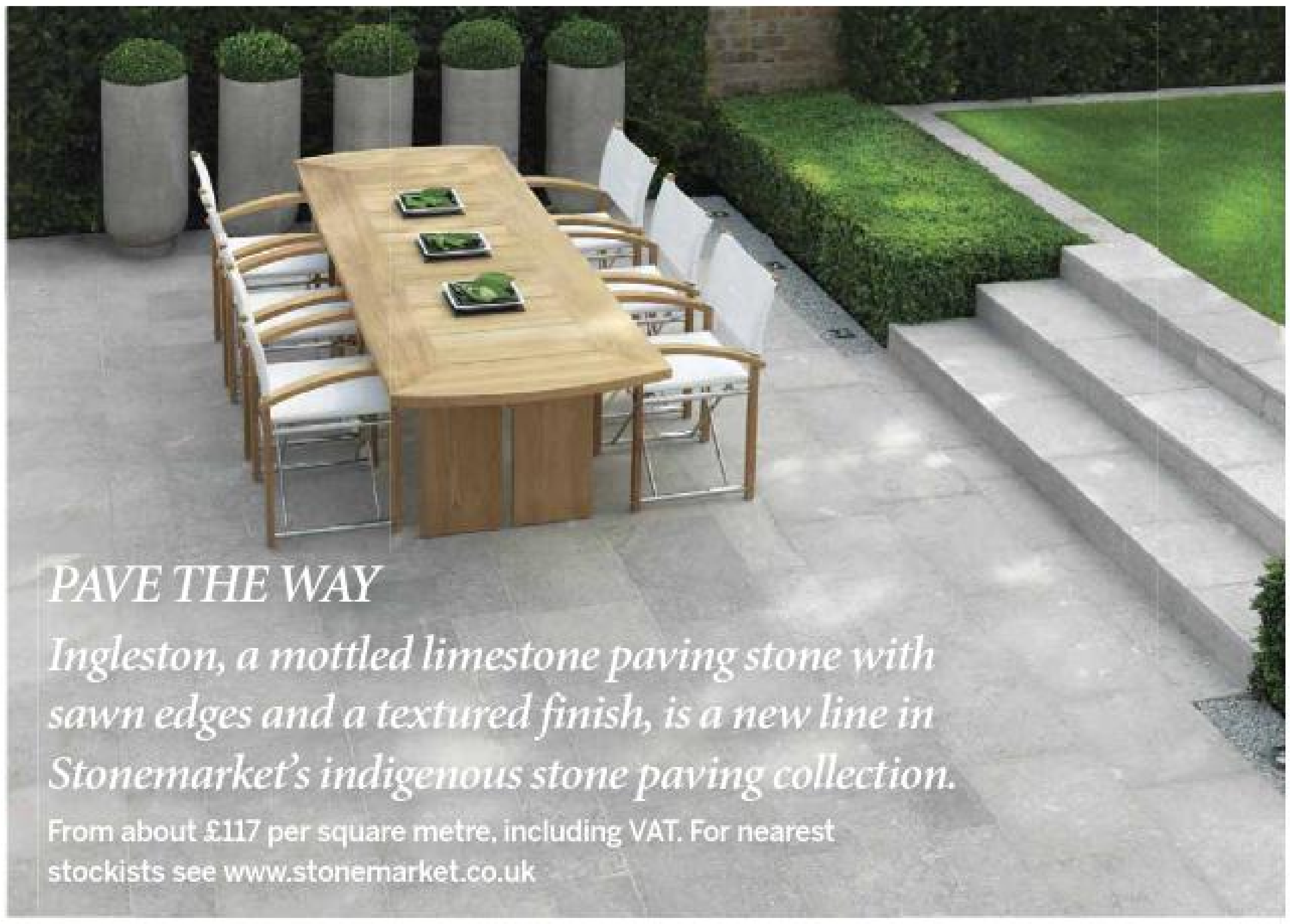
Seasonal leaves, roots, herbs, fruits and edible flowers from the new rooftop garden at the London headquarters of Coutts, now regularly feature on the menu at the private bank. The narrow terrace surrounding the triangular rooftop has been lined on two sides with more than 350 metres of bespoke wooden planters, made by participants of the Clink Charity, and this year the third side will also be planted up. Flowering plants such as lavender, roses and fuchsias are also grown, to encourage biodiversity.



RESTORATION

Southport seafront

The first step in the restoration of the historic seafront King's Gardens in Southport, which were opened in 1913 by King George V, has started with shrub clearance to reintroduce views from the promenade. A £4 million Heritage Lottery Grant is supporting the £5.5 million restoration of the 1931 Venetian bridge and islands, of nine Victorian cast-iron seating shelters, an Arts and Crafts style shelter, and the provision of a new visitor information centre.



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Notebook

- **Maintaining the Vision** is the theme for this spring's Society of Garden Designers conference, at Imperial College, London, on 27 April. Speakers, including Jake Hobson, Matthew Wilson, Clive Nichols and John Wyer, reveal how to maintain a designed garden. To book, call 01989 566695, www.sgd.org.uk
- **Key speakers at the GLDA annual design seminar** in Dublin on 6 April are Ulf Nordfjell, James Alexander-Sinclair, Jane McCorkell and Ciaran Burke. Tel +353 (0)1 294 0092, www.glda.ie
- **Garden writer Stephen Lacey** charts the design and planting movements of the past 30 years in the UK, Europe and America and reveals his top gardens. Garden Museum, London SE1, 25 April, 6.30pm. Tel 020 7401 8865, www.gardenmuseum.org.uk
- **Garden historian Twigs Way** gives an illustrated talk on royal gardens during Tudor times on 19 April (10am-1pm) at Cambridge University Botanic Garden. On 24 April, garden designer Dawn Isaac gives a one-day course on how to design a family garden. To book, call 01223 336265, www.botanic.cam.ac.uk
- ***Designing Gardens on Slopes*** by Elizabeth Davies and Ruth Chivers is a handbook for designers and garden makers that tackles the technical and aesthetic challenges of sloping plots. Packard Publishing, £19.99.

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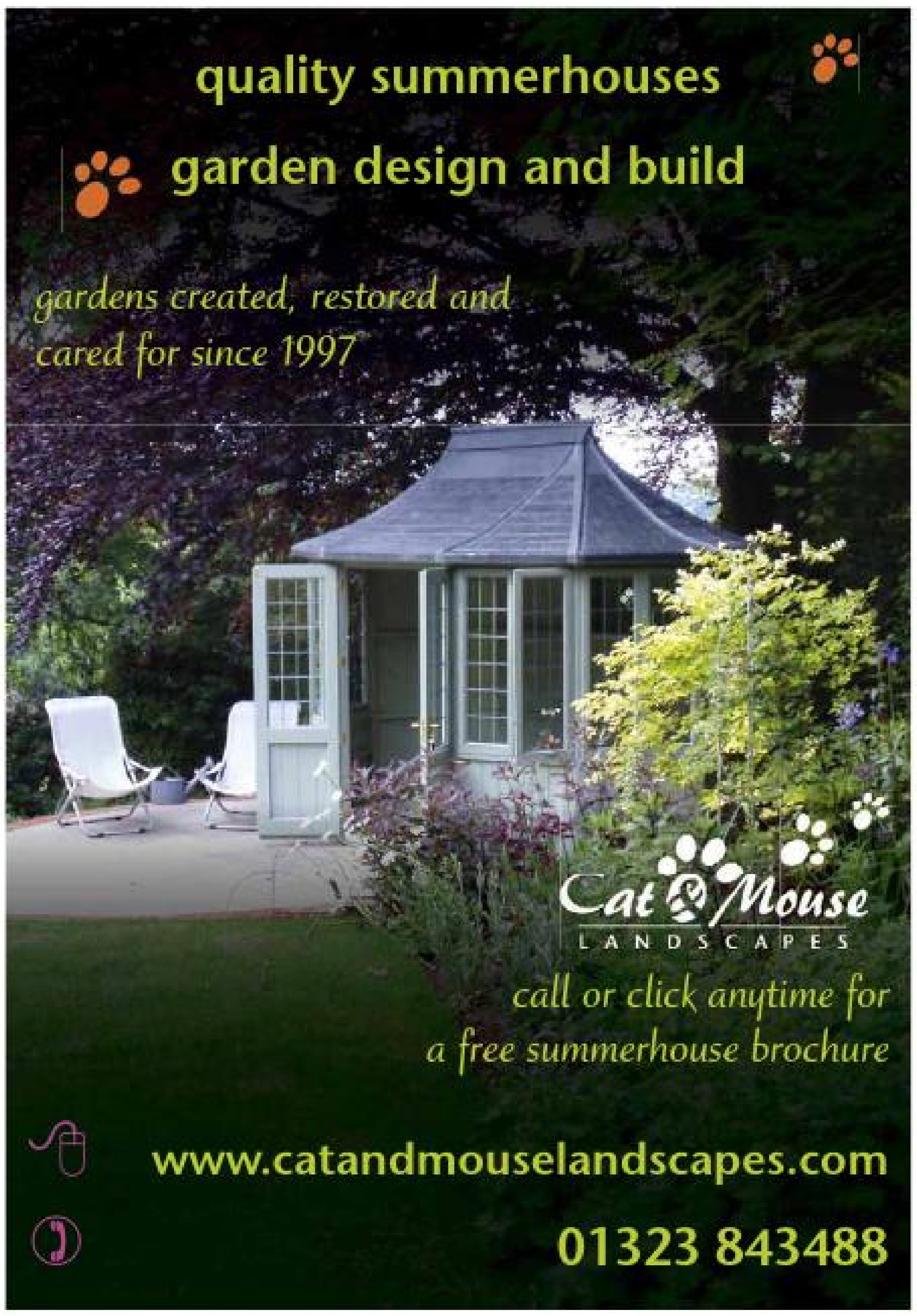

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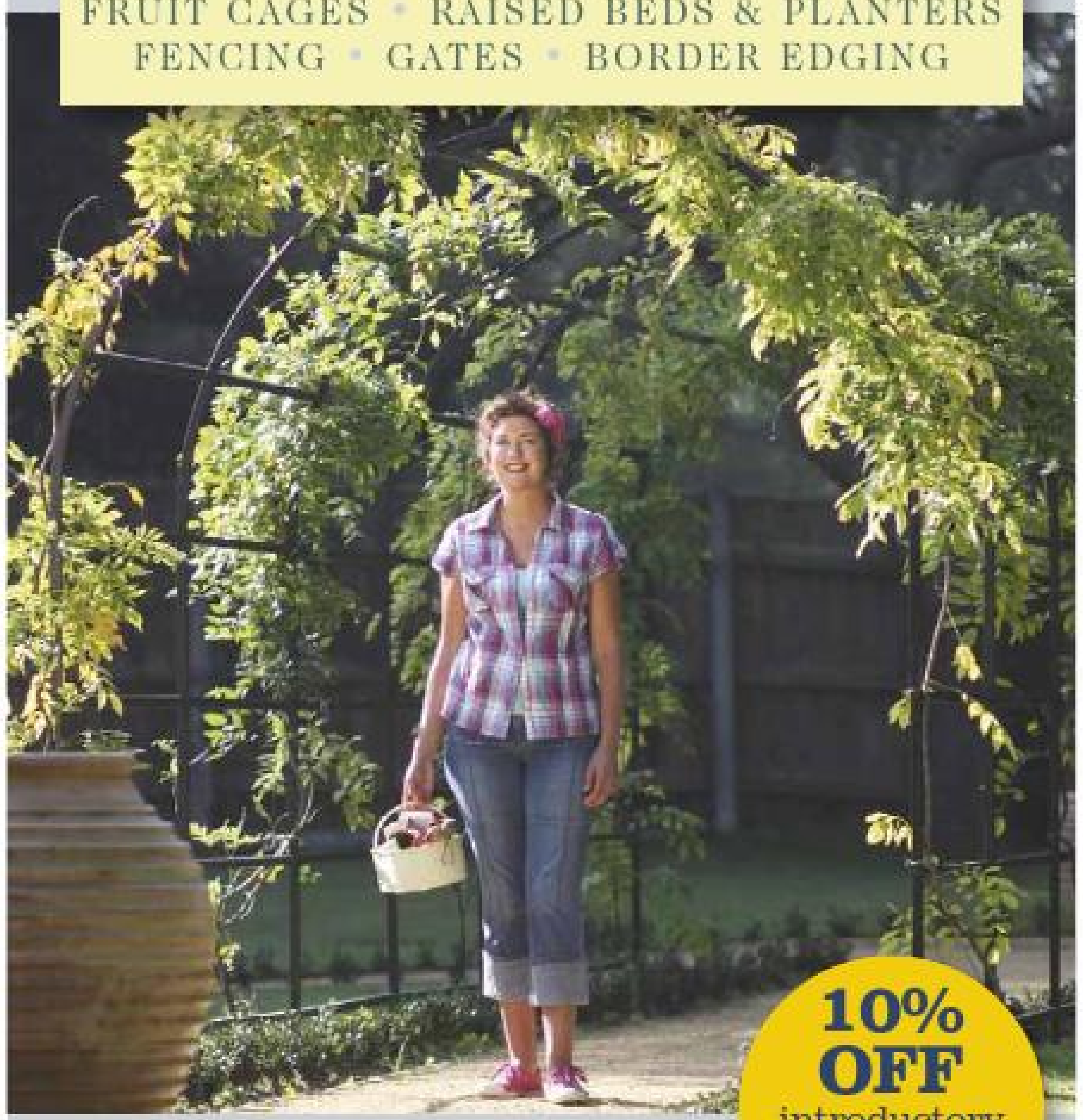

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Year-round colour in the garden

Given a bit of planning, you can select plants that will help provide a progression of colour and interest right through the floriferous months of spring and summer and on into autumn and winter

WORDS ANNIE GUILFOYLE

Annie Guilfoyle is Director of Garden Design at KLC School of Design. She is also Garden Course Coordinator at West Dean College and runs her own garden design studio.

When people say "…oh and of course my garden must have colour all year round" what do they really mean? Could it be a continual blaze of show-stopping colour or maybe a gentle progression of soft pastel shades? Colour theory alone is an enormous subject and could easily fill an entire series. In this article I focus on how to analyse your own garden and plan for a better spread of colour throughout the year, extending the seasonal interest.

Think green

First we need to appreciate that green is a colour; so many people ignore this important fact. Remember the stunning garden that Tom Stuart-Smith designed for Laurent-Perrier at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2008? It was predominantly green with a delicate touch of white, deservedly winning a gold medal and best in show, thus demonstrating the power of green.

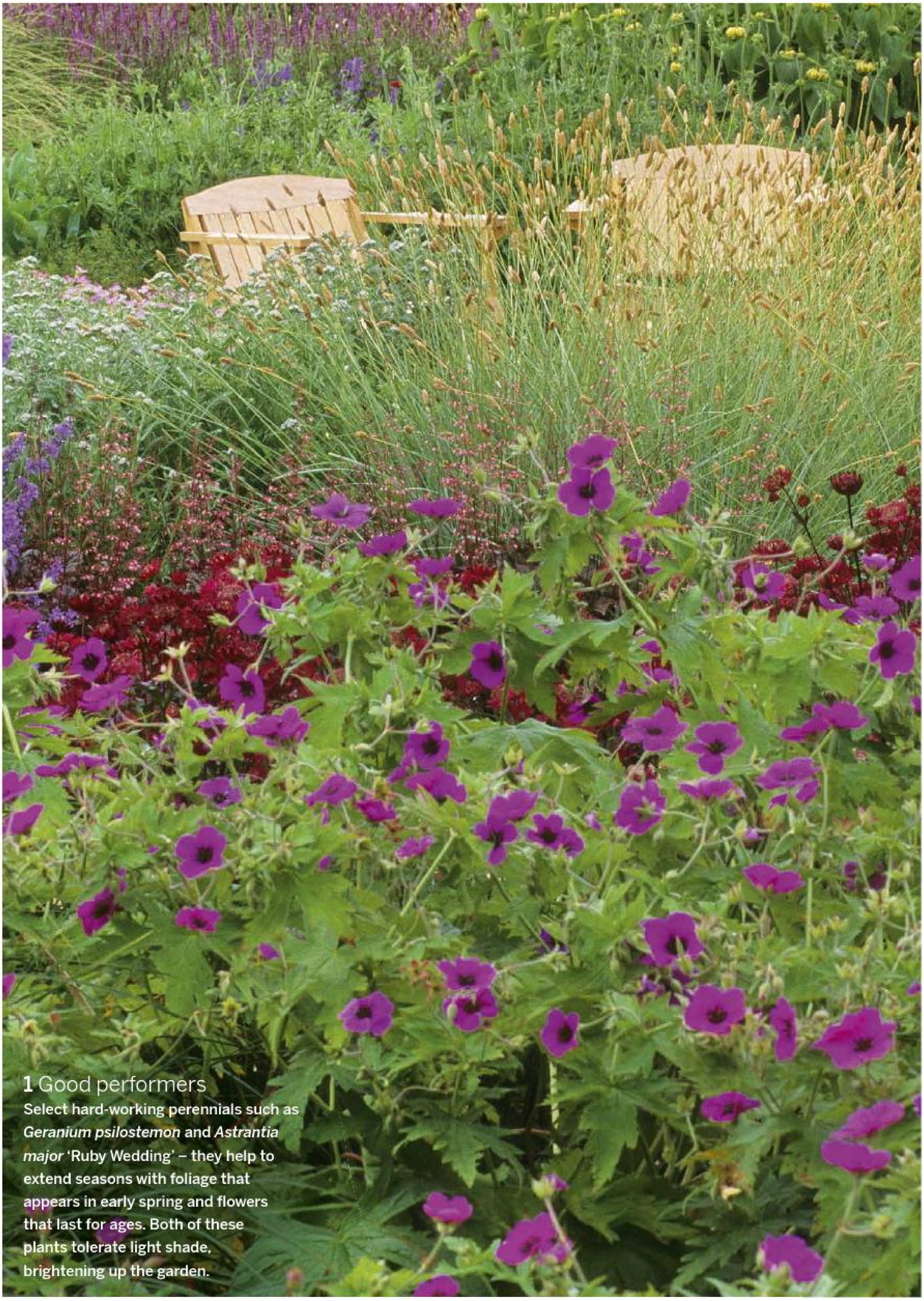
Leaves generally emerge before the flowers on most plants and will tend to last long after the flowers have faded, so it makes sense to take advantage of the wonderful range of greens that are available. For example, *Euphorbia polychroma* heralds the spring creating delightful mounds of vivid yellow-green. *Ballota pseudodictamnus* a tough, silvery-green character provides excellent low-level structure. The grey-greens are so useful as they will happily sit next to almost any other colour in the border. Then there are the sombre dark-greens that add depth and richness to a garden. Shrubs such as *Viburnum rhytidophyllum*, that so often get overlooked, with its dark, velvety leaves, makes a very handsome backdrop. Variegated leaves, although not to everyone's taste, can be very uplifting on a grim winter's day. Take *Elaeagnus* x *ebbingei* 'Gilt Edge', perfect for a gloomy corner of the garden where lesser shrubs would struggle, its yellow leaf margins shine out and demand attention.

Make it last

Maintaining colour interest from May to August is relatively easy to achieve and many gardens look their best during this period. But making an impact from late summer through to the end of winter can prove to be much more of a challenge. So it's a good idea to focus on plants that have an extended flowering period, perennials such as *Geranium psilostemon* and *Astrantia major* will happily flower for months on end from spring to late autumn. But for the long winter stretch you could choose *Helleborus foetidus* and *Heuchera micrantha* 'Obsidian' to work their magic. Using coloured stems and ornamental bark is another way of continuing colour through the winter. Trees such as *Prunus serrula* and *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii* are popular choices with their striking, coloured bark. If you would like something a little more unusual then explore other *Betula* species, such as *ermanii* with glorious cappuccino-coloured bark fading to creamy-white. Select trees and shrubs that have two or more seasons of interest, for instance *Amelanchier lamarckii* starts off in early spring with soft pink buds, closely followed by

Continued on page 102 ▷

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.



1 Good performers

Select hard-working perennials such as *Geranium psilostemon* and *Astrantia major* 'Ruby Wedding' – they help to extend seasons with foliage that appears in early spring and flowers that last for ages. Both of these plants tolerate light shade, brightening up the garden.

MARIANNE MAJERUS

2 Plant combinations

I use clematis a lot in my planting designs; they are so useful for adding another season of interest to a tree or shrub. The lime green *Robinia pseudoacacia* leaves are perfectly contrasted by the burgundy flowers of the *Clematis* 'Étoile Violette', offering late summer pizzazz.

3 Touches of colour

This outdoor potting bench and sink has been enhanced by my client's homemade, mosaic splash back. Even the more utilitarian areas of a garden can be brightened up, using colourful materials such as mosaic tiles, stone or glass.

4 Bright berries

The winter garden does not have to be dull and drab. These branches of *Crataegus monogyna* are covered with bright red berries and are draped with the wonderful, fluffy seed heads of *Clematis vitalba*.

5 Interesting bark

If you are going to plant a tree with decorative bark such as this *Prunus serrula*, make sure that it is positioned where it will catch the winter sun and is easily viewed from the house in winter.

6 Sensational shrubs

One of my very favourite shrubs, *Itea ilicifolia* has so much to offer. An elegant, evergreen wall shrub with delicate greenish-white racemes that can grow up to 40cm in length!

7 Green carpet

Carex and *Alchemilla mollis* planted together are perfect partners, brightening up a lightly shaded area of the garden. Underplant this with summer bulbs to really add a zing to the combination.

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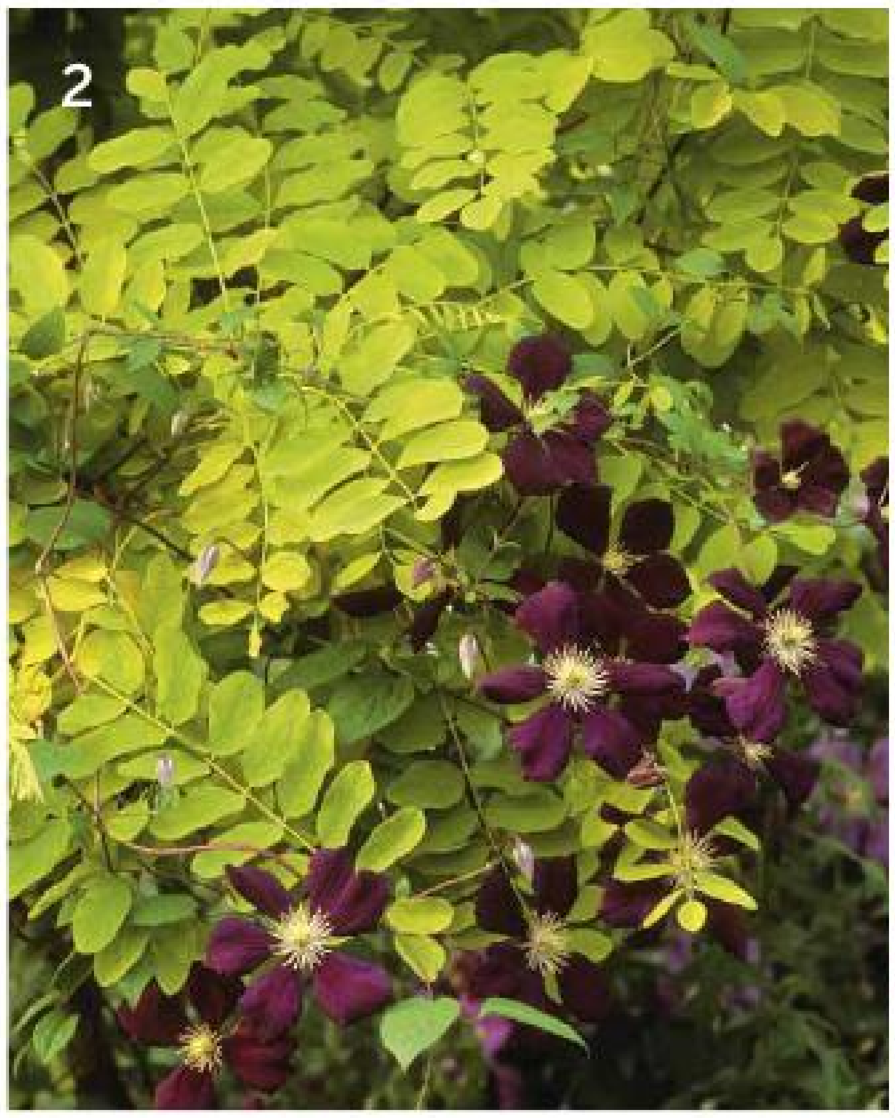

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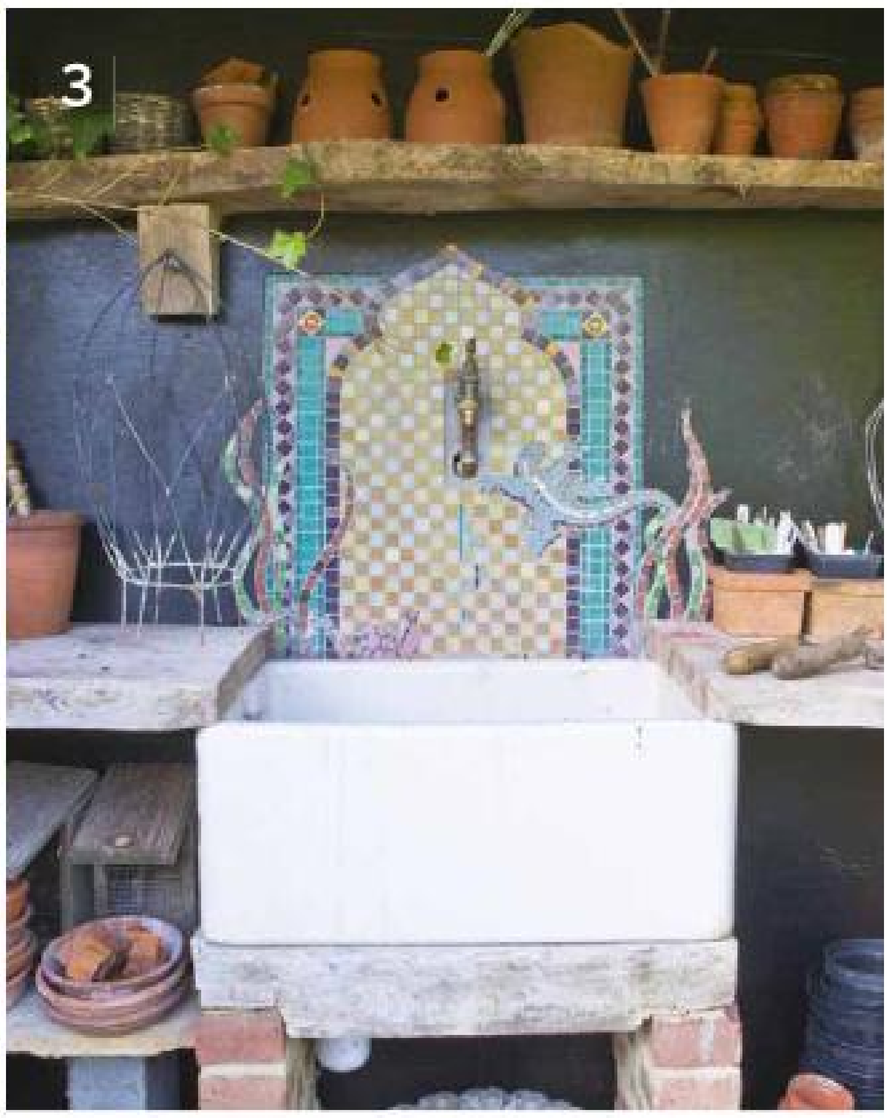

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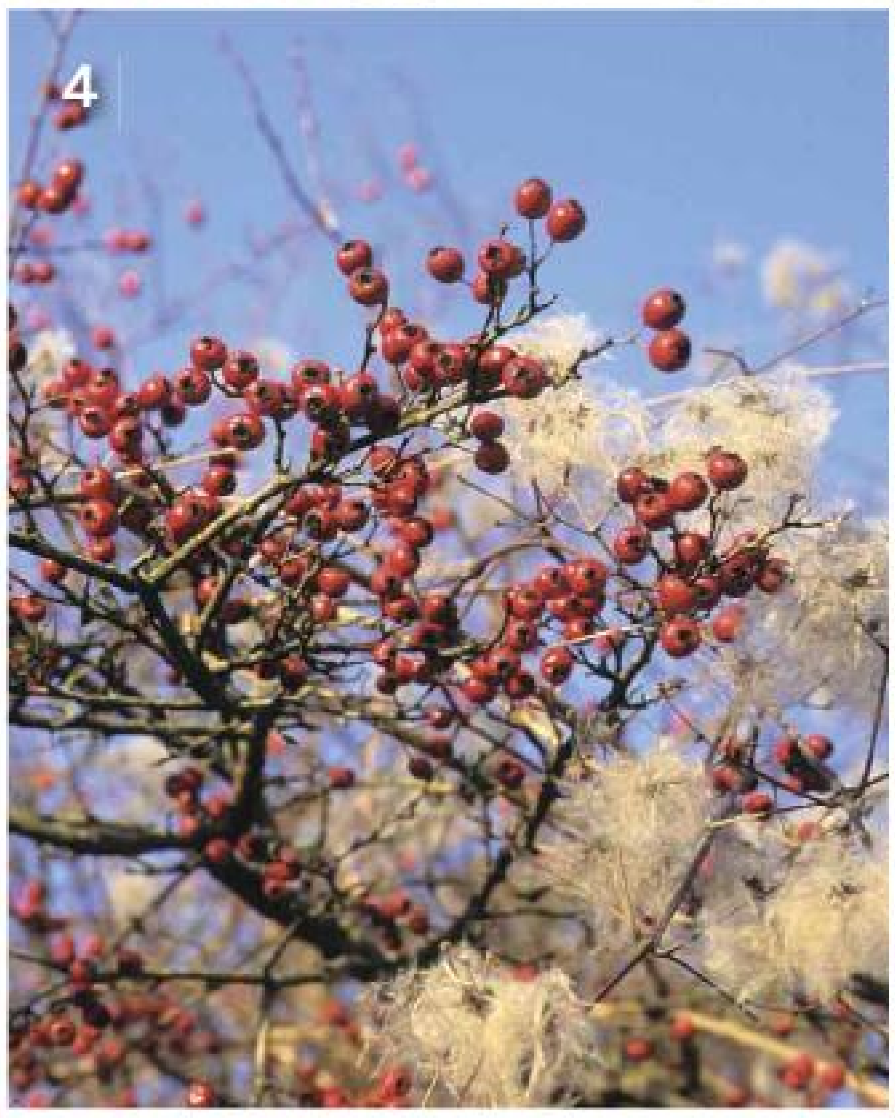

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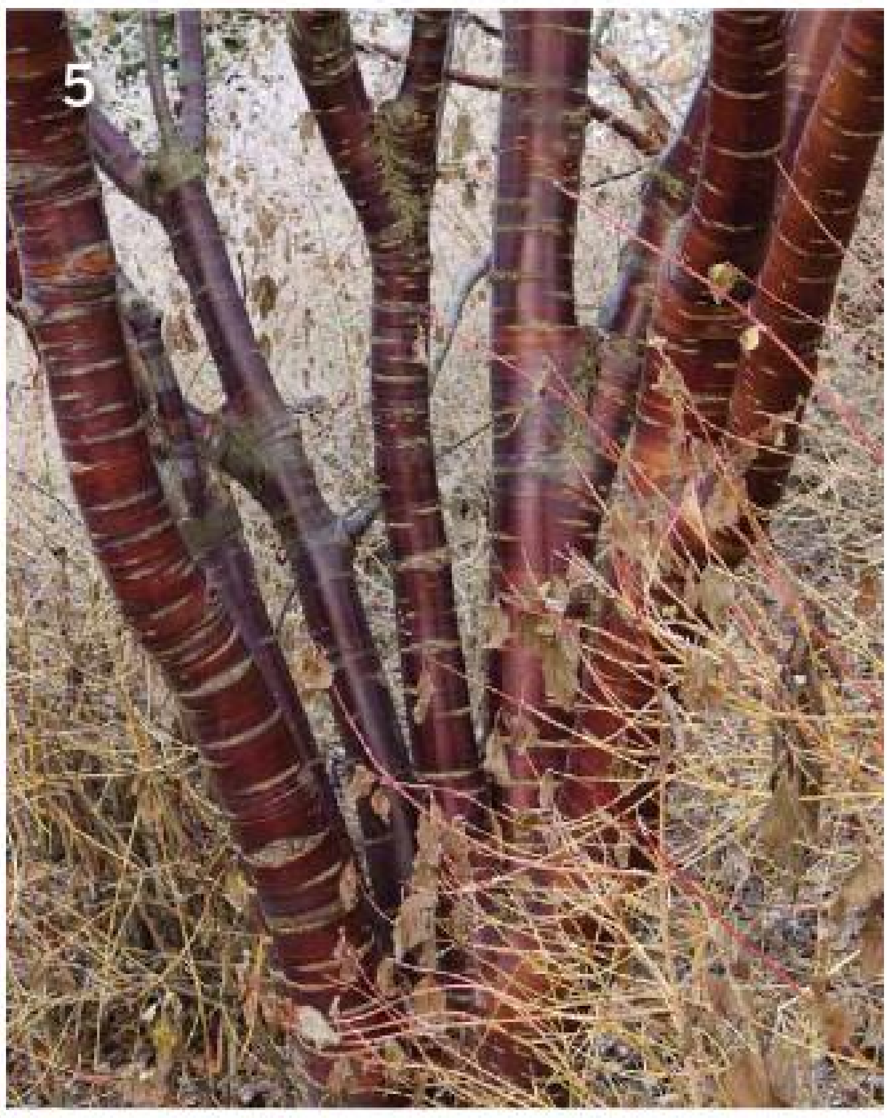

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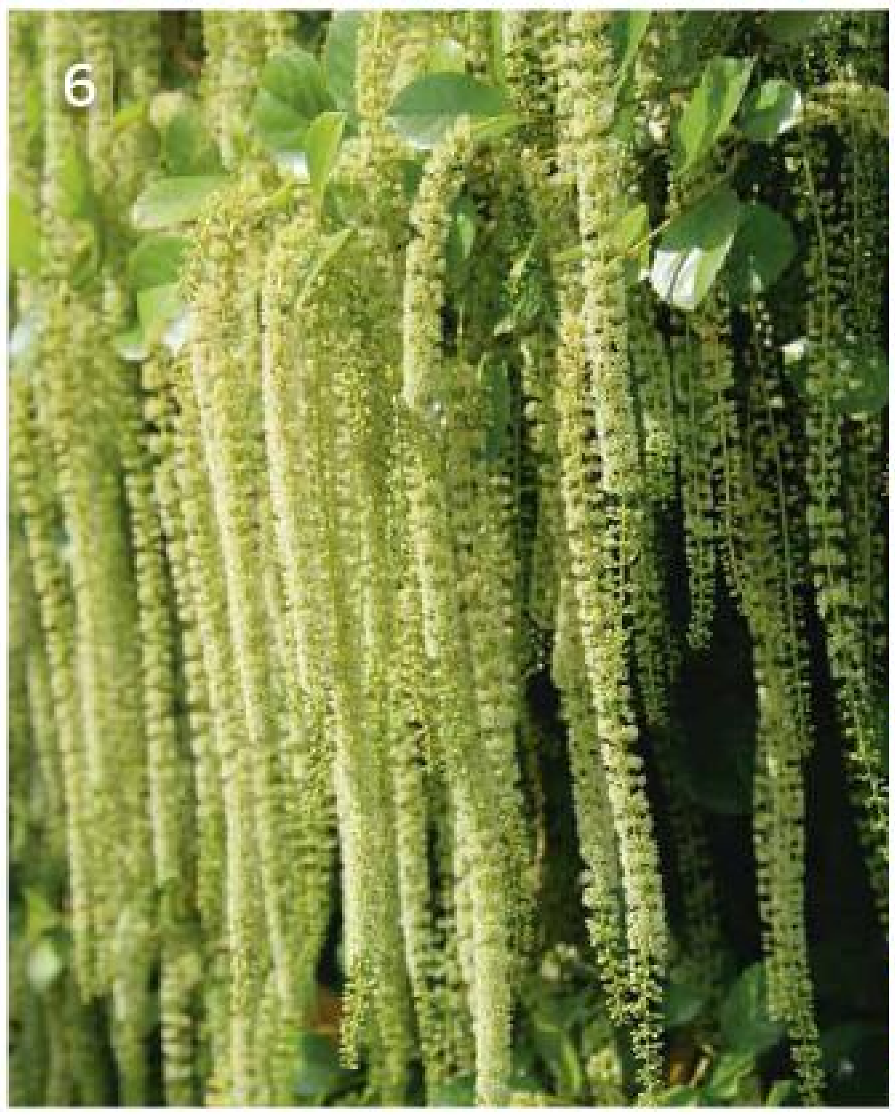

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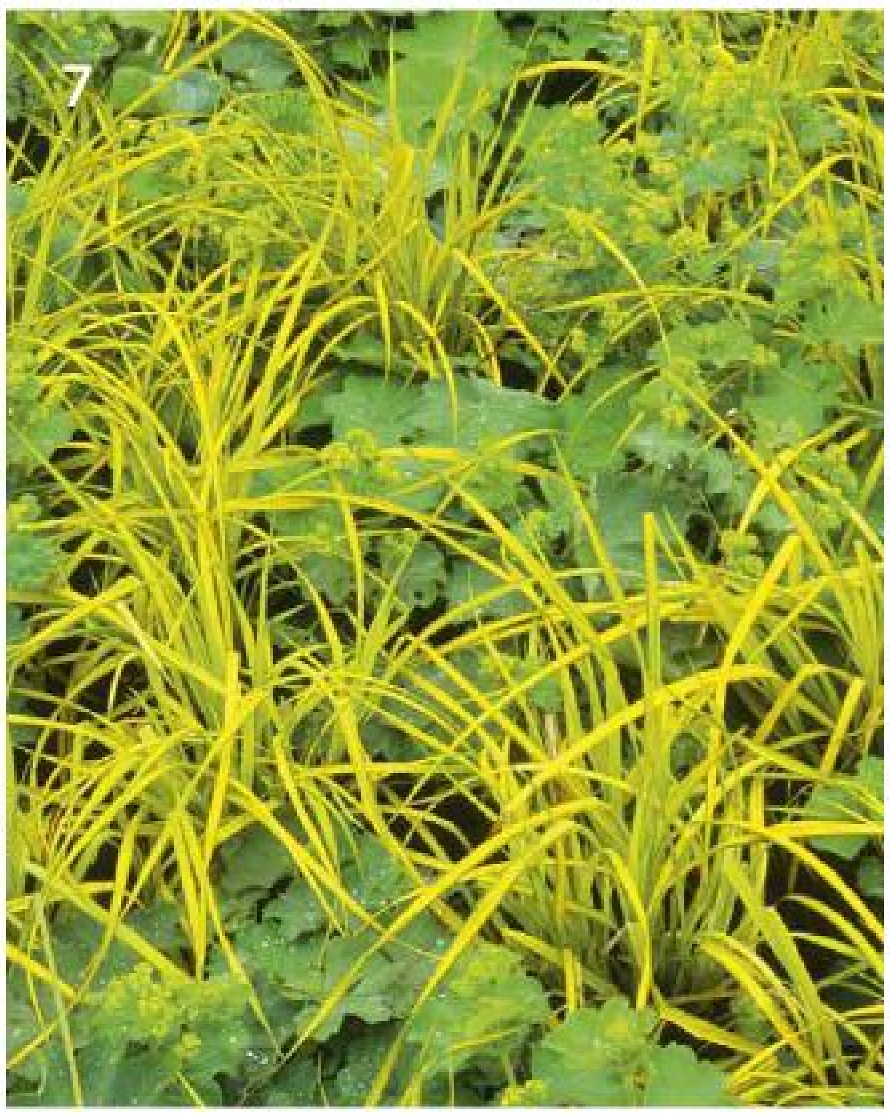
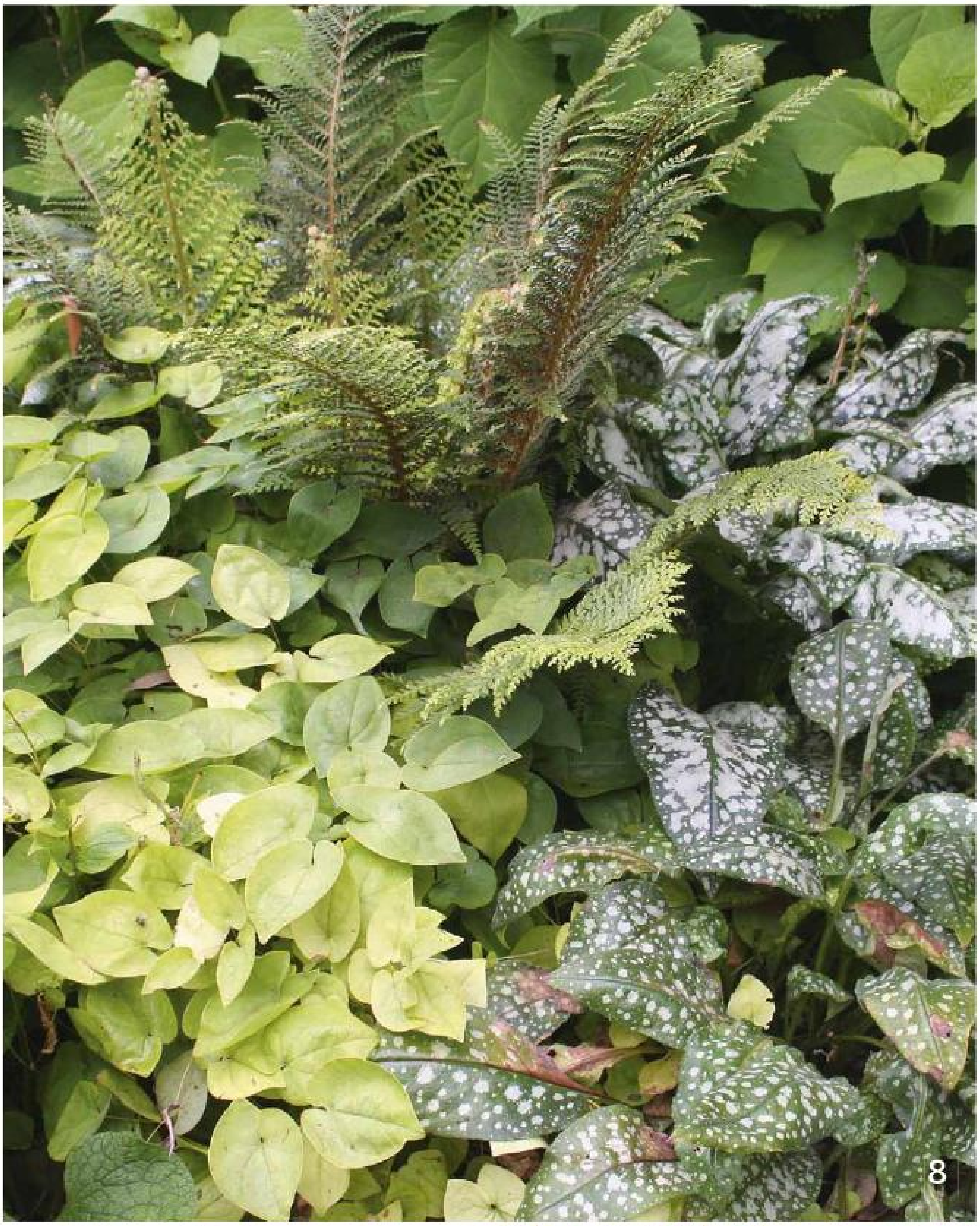


2, 4, 5 & 7 MARIANNE MAJERUS; 3 CLIVE NICHOLS; 6 FLORAPIX / ALAMY



8 ANNIE GUILFOYLE 9 TORIE CHUGG / THE GARDEN COLLECTION 10 JOHN GLOVER / ALAMY

8 Texture and tone

A dry, shady border at West Dean Gardens in West Sussex is planted with a superb mix of ground cover perennials. The spotty-leaved *Pulmonaria* will provide early spring interest and the heart-shaped *Epimedium* will carry on through the long winter.

9 Dark foliage

With so many heucheras available it can be a difficult choice but I come back to this one time after time. *Heuchera* 'Obsidian' is one of the darkest, with stunning purple-black leaves that often persist through winter. For sheer drama, underplant it with orange tulips.

10 Evergreen interest

It can be challenging to find a tough and interesting evergreen shrub for a dark and gloomy corner of the garden. *Elaeagnus* x *ebbingei* 'Gilt Edge' will happily take that spot and its variegated leaves brighten up the darkest winter day.

Inspirational books for further reading

- *Colour in the Garden* by Val Bourne (Merrell, £18.95) Ideas for each season.
- *Colour in Your Garden* by Penelope Hobhouse (Frances Lincoln, £19.99) An invaluable source.
- *The Gardening Year* by Christopher Lloyd (Frances Lincoln, £18.99) Every gardener's bible.
- *The Hillier Gardeners' Guides – The Winter Garden* by Jane Sterndale-Bennett (David & Charles, £14.99) Ideas for for winter interest.
- *Successional Planting for Adventurous Gardeners* by Christopher Lloyd (BBC, £25) Create little bit of Great Dixter at home.

11 Grey-green

Ballota pseudodictamnus has a soft, velvety texture that belies how tough it really is. This sturdy evergreen offers structure all year round; the gentle shade of grey blends happily with any colour and it works well in dry conditions.

12 Winter cheer

This is the plant that you should reach for when you need something that is not too large, will happily grow in dry shade and provide delicate, winter interest. Don't let the name (stinking hellebore) put you off, just call it *Helleborus foetidus* and enjoy!

13 Soothing green

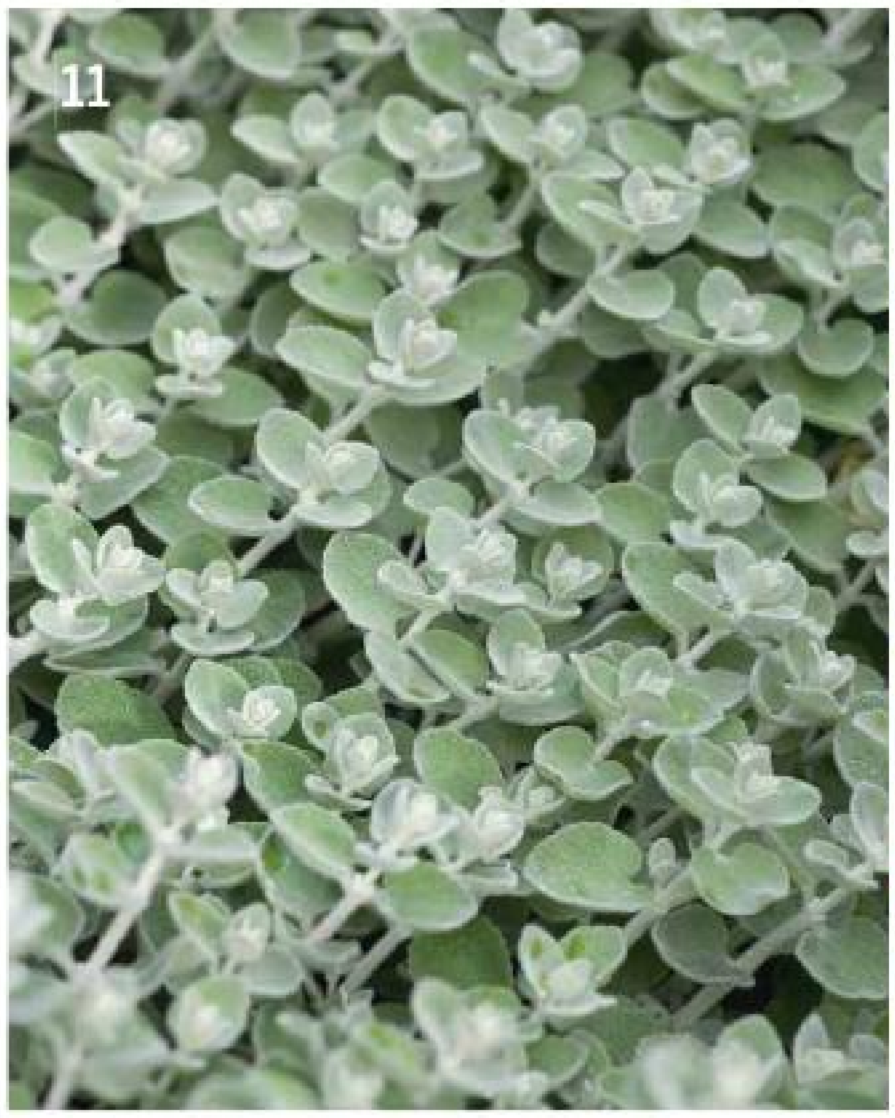
Tom Stuart-Smith's gold-medal-winning garden for Laurent-Perrier at Chelsea Flower Show in 2008 was a celebration of texture and form, demonstrating how to use green and white to create a garden that soothes the soul.

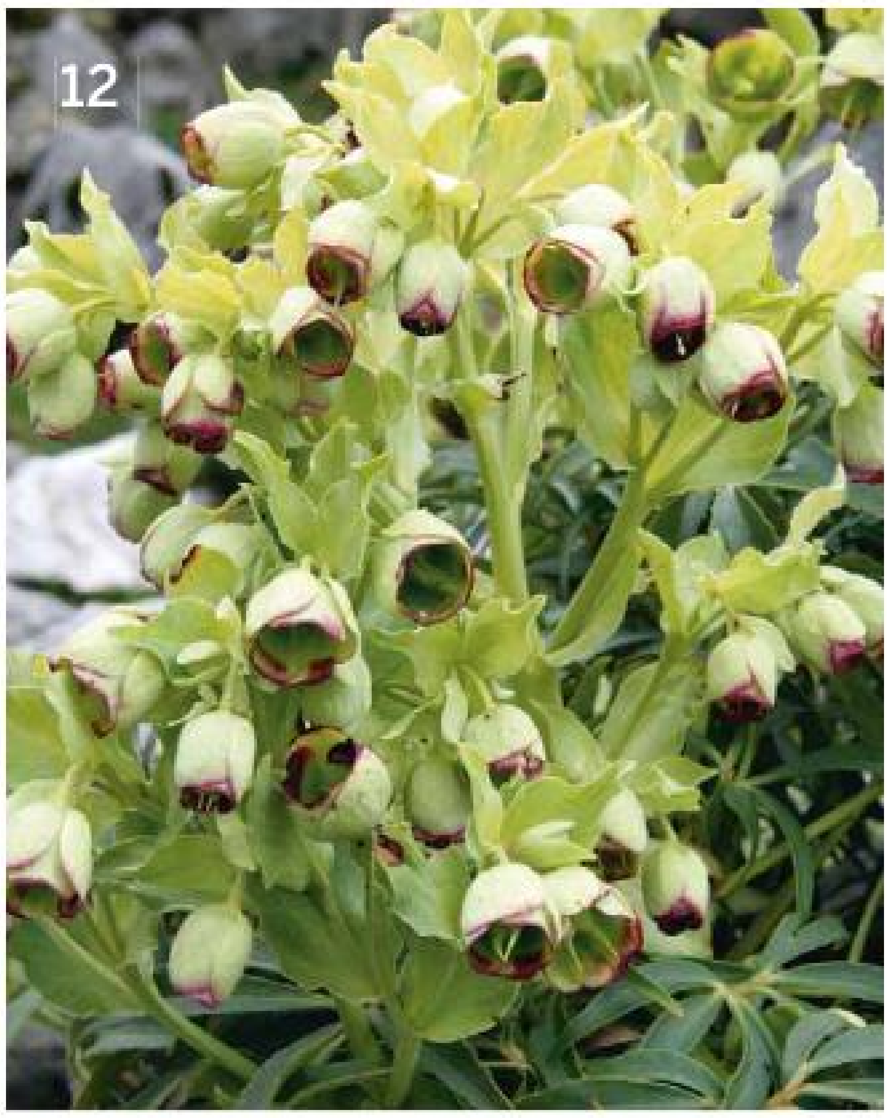
14 Bulbs beyond spring

Nectaroscordum siculum is a particularly beautiful bulb. Grow them up through a carpet of ground cover to inject a splash of late spring colour, and enjoy watching them unfold.

15 Contrasting foliage

I spotted this dramatic colour combination at the RHS Gardens at Wisley. The inky-black *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens' contrasts perfectly with the lime green *Hakonechloa macra*. Similar in form but strikingly different in colour, it leaps out from a shady border to surprise you.





starry-white flowers and finally ruby-red fruits with orange-red autumn leaves. *Viburnum opulus* is an excellent shrub for providing early summer flowers followed by richly coloured autumn foliage. *Salix* and *Cornus* are wonderfully tough shrubs, and if cut back hard the new growth provides vivid, winter colour that can work so well when surrounded by a carpet of spring bulbs such as *Galanthus*.

Be clever with climbers – for example grow a late summer-flowering *Clematis viticella* 'Polish Spirit' through an early flowering shrub such as *Photinia* x *fraseri* 'Red Robin'. This adds a whole new dimension to the shrub once it has finished flowering. For covering fences and walls, if you choose your clematis carefully it is possible to have colour every single month.

Use bulbs to inject shots of colour throughout the year; don't just save them for late winter or spring. They are ideal where space is really tight; try planting *Allium hollandicum* 'Purple Sensation' among low-growing perennials to add floating globes of colour in early summer. The later-flowering *Allium sphaerocephalon* benefits from being grown up through a wiry shrub with its bobbing, burgundy flowers resembling oversized bees.

Plan ahead

Careful planning is essential before ordering and planting. Remember the mantra 'right plant, right place'. Which basically means you should only select plants that will suit your site and conditions. First you need to consider all the horticultural factors in your garden. This may narrow down the choices but does help you to choose the plants that will thrive. Starting with the soil, find out whether it is clay, loam, sand or chalk. The structure, texture and pH of the soil are extremely important and will influence how it holds water, nutrients and minerals. Think about the aspect and local climate; consider the areas of light and shade, which could differ significantly from area to area within one garden. Once you know all this information you can then select the appropriate plants.

The next thing to do is make a list all of the existing plants in the garden that you intend to keep. Divide them up into monthly columns according to their colour attributes (use a spread sheet if you are so inclined). Don't just focus on flowers but consider leaves, fruit, stems and bark! It should then be easy to identify when and where the colour interest dwindles during the year, and now you can plan your new plant list.

There are other ways of introducing colour into the garden in addition to plants. There is a huge range of hard landscaping materials to choose from. You can paint the walls and fences, or add decorative features into the garden such as mosaic, art and sculpture. Using materials or paint can be a very effective way of giving the garden a consistent backdrop or brightening up a dull space. Working with colour is great fun and everyone will have their personal colour preferences, so it's important to keep a focus on what you like. ☐

NEXT MONTH Be inspired!

13

14

15

11 NIALL MCDIARMID / ALAMY 12 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / ALAMY 13-15 ANNIE GUILFOYLE

Know your greens

Here is a list of plants that offer a variety of green tones.

Dark greens

- *Magnolia grandiflora* 'Blanchard' USDA 6a-10b†
- *Pileostegia viburnoides* AGM* RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b
- *Ruscus aculeatus* RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b
- *Viburnum rhytidophyllum* RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b

Silver greens

- *Astelia chathamica* AGM USDA 8b-11
- *Elaeagnus* x *ebbingei* RHS H4, USDA 7a-10b
- *Hippophae rhamnoides* AGM RHS H4, USDA 3a-7b
- *Sorbus aria* 'Lutescens' AGM RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b

Variegated

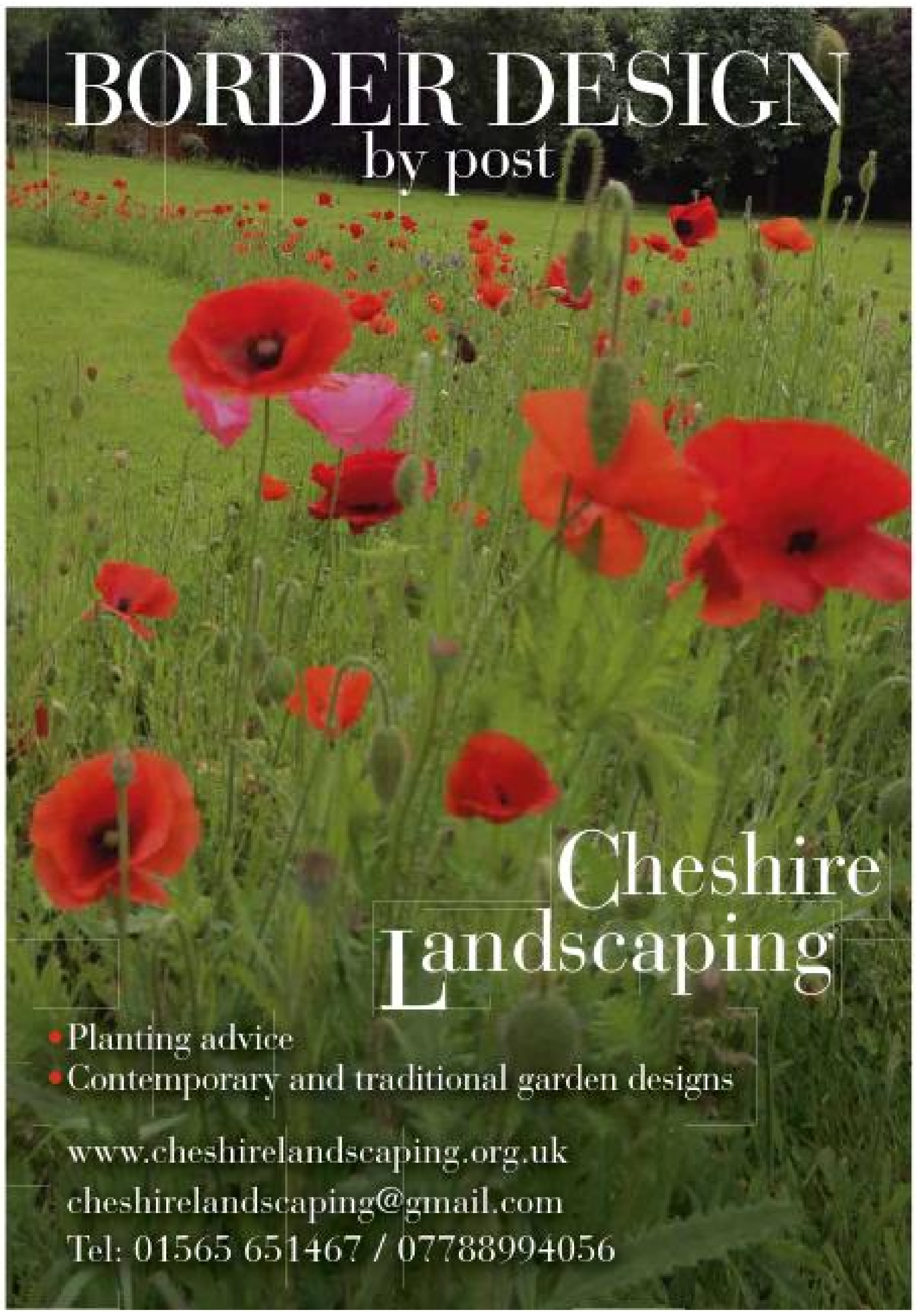
- *Azara microphylla* 'Variegata' RHS H3, USDA 8b-11
- *Fatsia japonica* 'Variegata' AGM RHS H3, USDA 8a-10a
- *Hakonechloa macra* 'Alboaurea' AGM RHS H4
- *Hosta* 'Golden Tiara' AGM RHS H4, USDA 3a-9a
- *Pleioblastus viridistriatus* AGM RHS H4, USDA 7a-11

Yellow greens

- *Carex elata* 'Aurea' AGM RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b
- *Caryopteris* x *clandonensis* 'Worcester Gold' AGM RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b
- *Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Sunburst' AGM
- *Philadelphus coronarius* 'Aureus' AGM RHS H4, USDA 5a-9a
- *Sambucus nigra* 'Aurea' AGM RHS H4

White greens

- *Astrantia major* subsp. *involucrata* 'Shaggy' AGM RHS H4, USA 5a-9b
- *Eryngium giganteum* AGM RHS H4
- *Itea ilicifolia* AGM RHS H3, USDA 4a-9b



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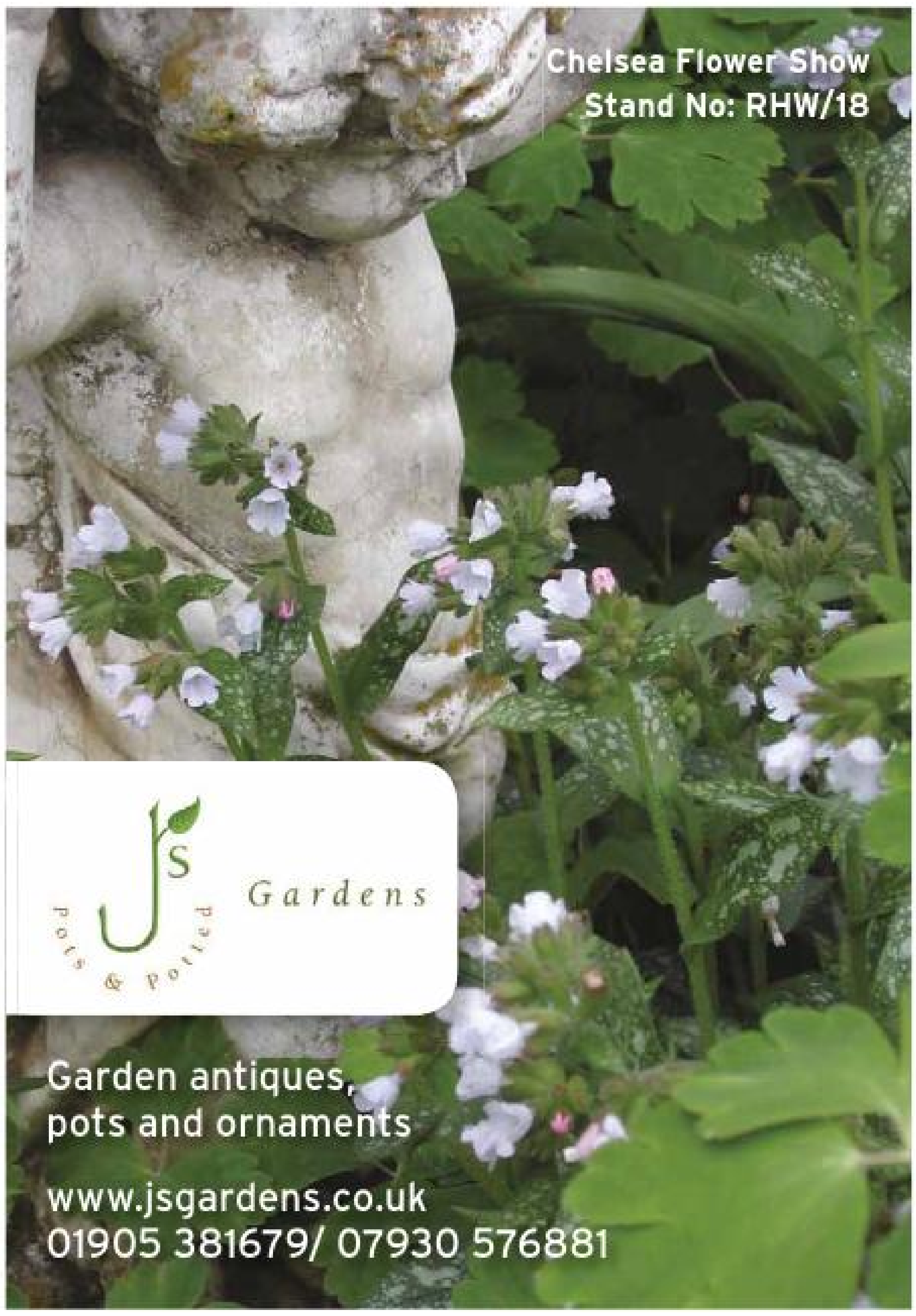

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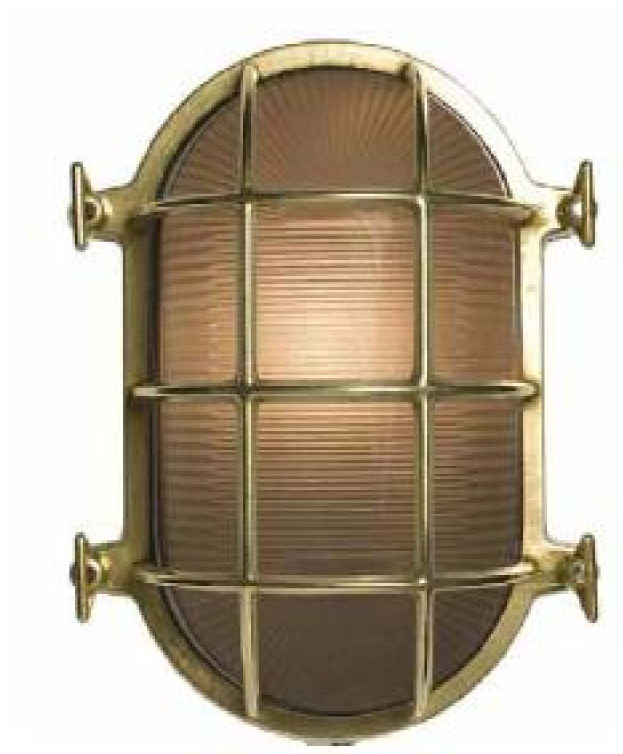

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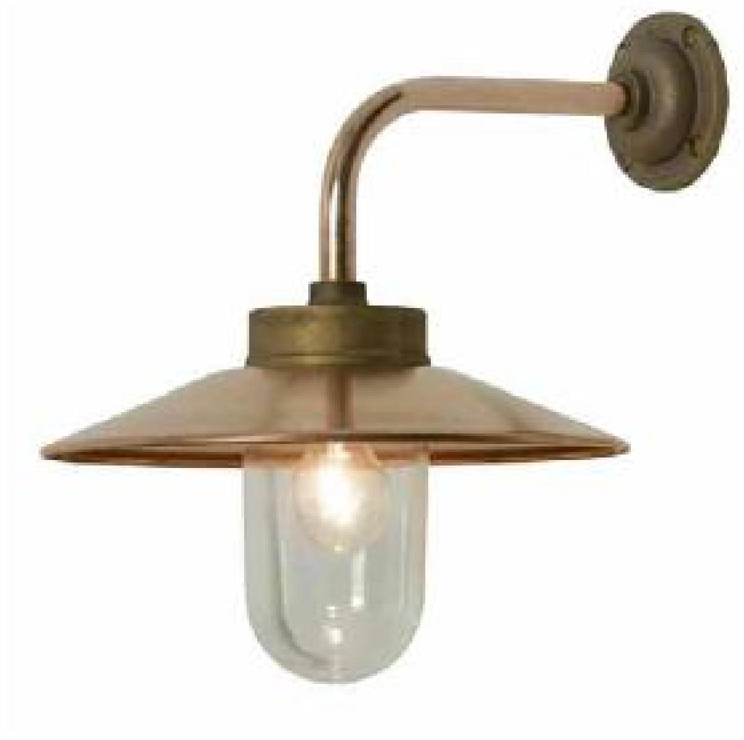

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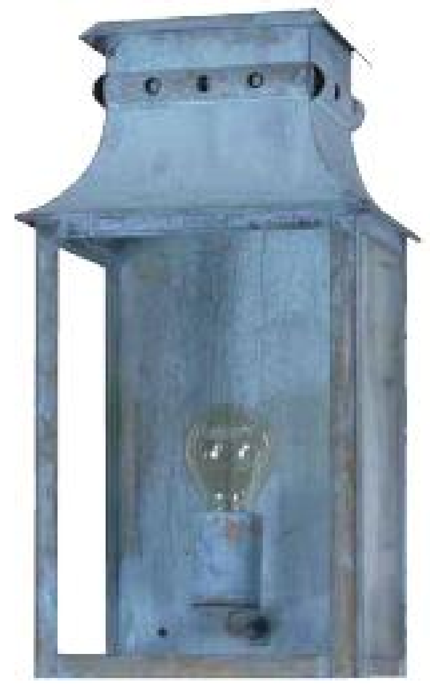

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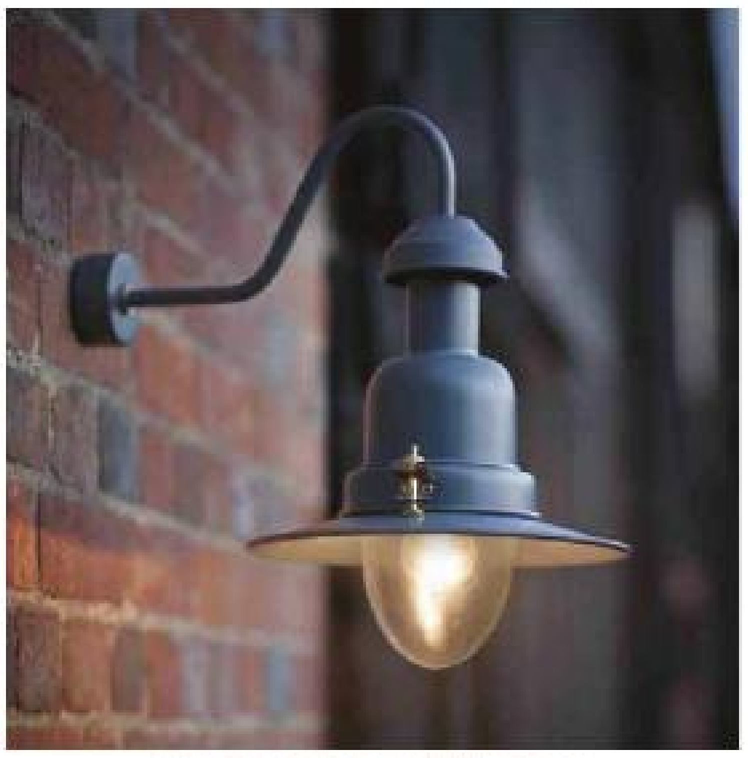

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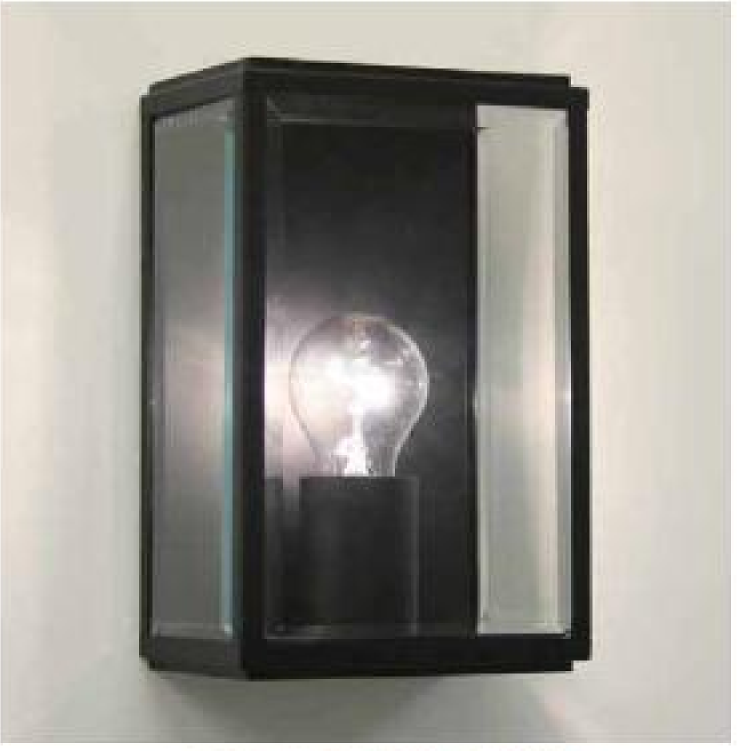

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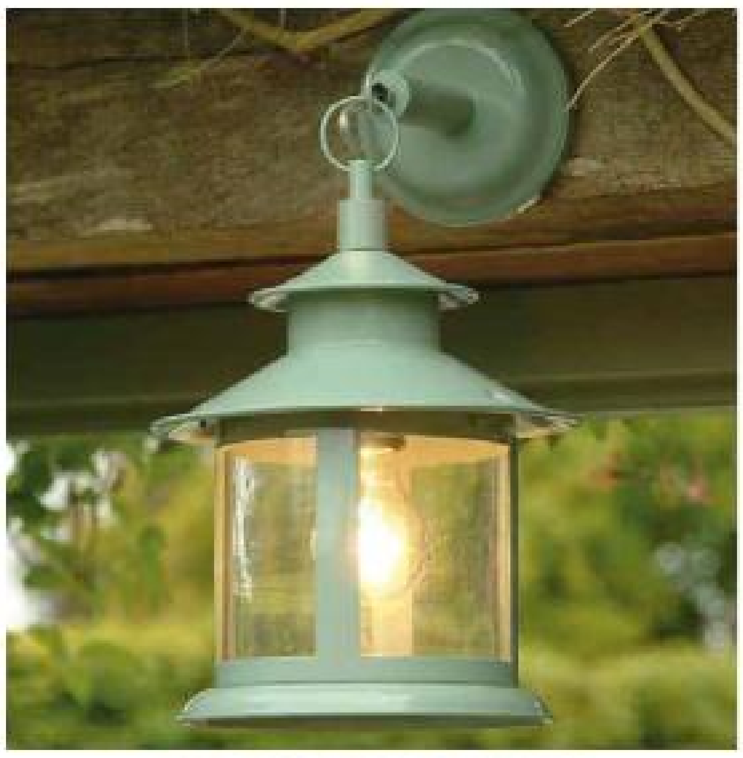

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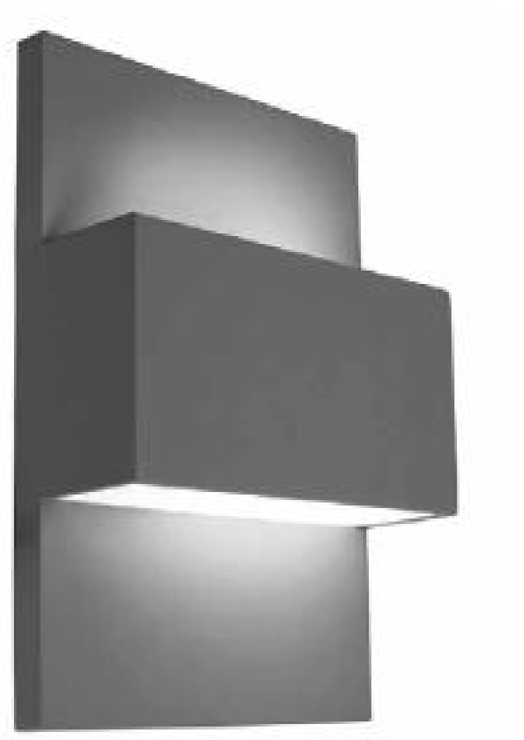

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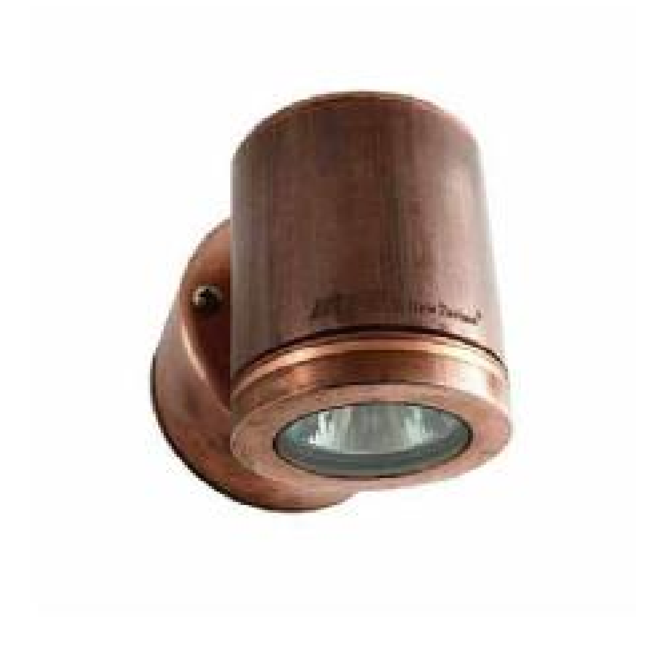

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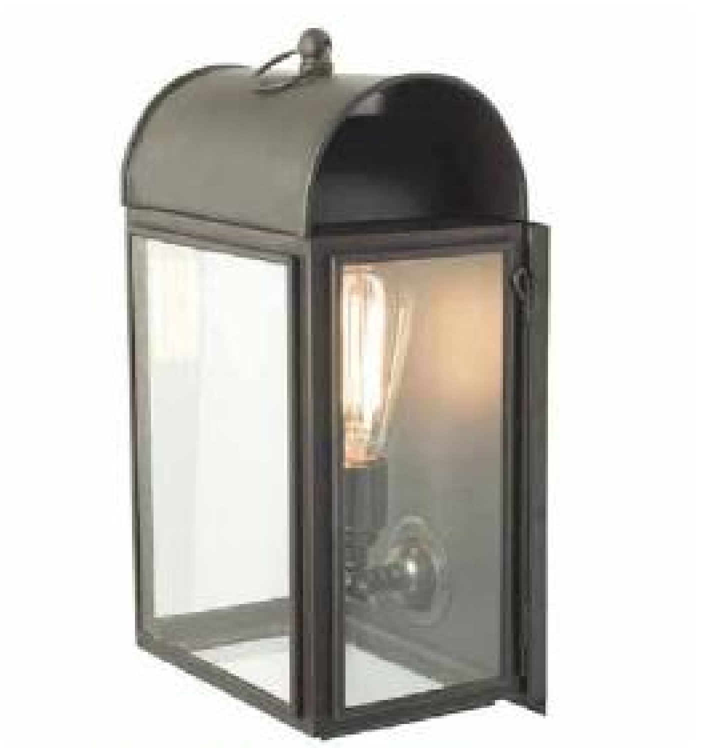

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Swathes of dog daisies line a field edge, just one example of wildflower inspiration explored in Carol Klein's new book, reviewed on page 111.

JONATHAN BUCKLEY

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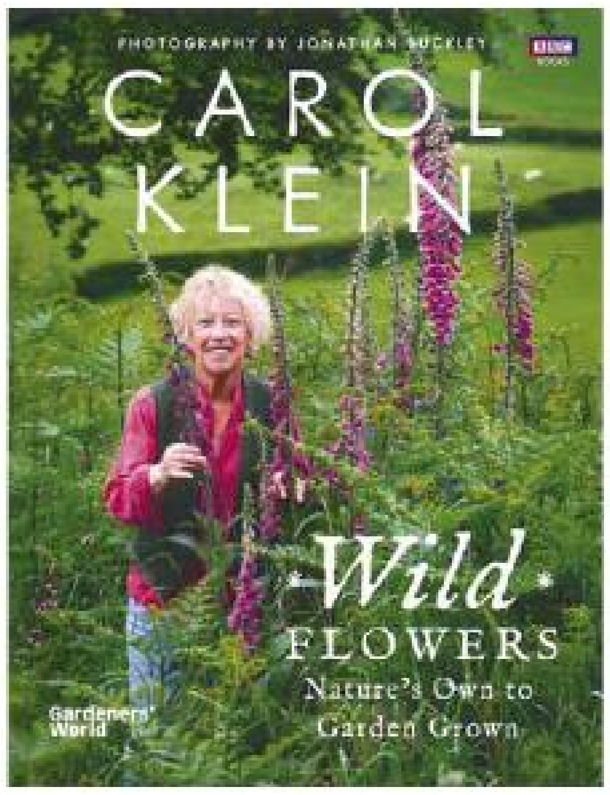
Book reviews

WILD FLOWERS: NATURE'S OWN TO GARDEN GROWN

by Carol Klein
BBC Books, £20
ISBN 978-1849905848



JONATHAN BUCKLEY

Wild flowers and their cultivated cousins examined in great detail.

Like any paid up plantaholic, Carol Klein has vivid memories of when and where she first saw a particular flower, so although this book is primarily a guide to some of her favourite wildflowers and how to grow their cultivated cousins, she enlivens the practical information with her memories of some of her earliest encounters. There were the Sunday outings when the only way she and her mother could get her speed-demon father to stop so that they could see the flowers, was to plead a different call of nature. Free of the car they would disappear out of sight and 'collapse in fits of giggles and squeals of delight on cushions of violets and carpets of primroses'.

As ever with Carol, there is an appealing turn of phrase combined with a real passion for the plant that she is describing, all backed up by a wealth of horticultural knowledge. Rather than stating baldly that most alliums have ugly leaves, Carol declares that they 'need companions to hide their basal shame'. Reading her books is always an education. Among the things I learned was to plant large-bulbed fritillaries on their sides to prevent them filling with water, that fern trains used to travel from north Devon to London for the flower markets, and that *Iris reticulata* and *I. histrioides* are more likely to endure if the bulbs are planted six inches deep. There's great advice on wave planting in the section on *Achillea* and included in the grasses pages there's an excellent primer on the locations that various grasses do best. It's the miscellaneous nature of the information that she divulges that make her books such a good read.

This book is divided into seasons from 'Spring Shoots' to 'Winter Wonders' and is published as an accompaniment to a series of short films on wild flowers that Carol has made for *Gardeners' World*. Jonathan Buckley's accompanying photography is as reliably gorgeous as Carol's prose is entertaining – and he captures wonderfully just how relaxed and happy Carol is among the plants she loves.

Stephanie Donaldson is a writer specialising in organic gardening

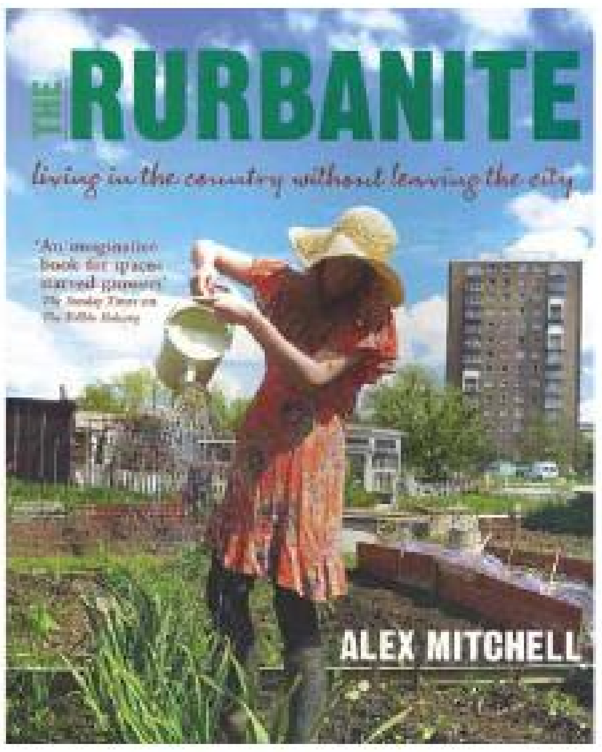
book offer

RRP £20. **Reader offer price £18** including p&p.

Book reviews

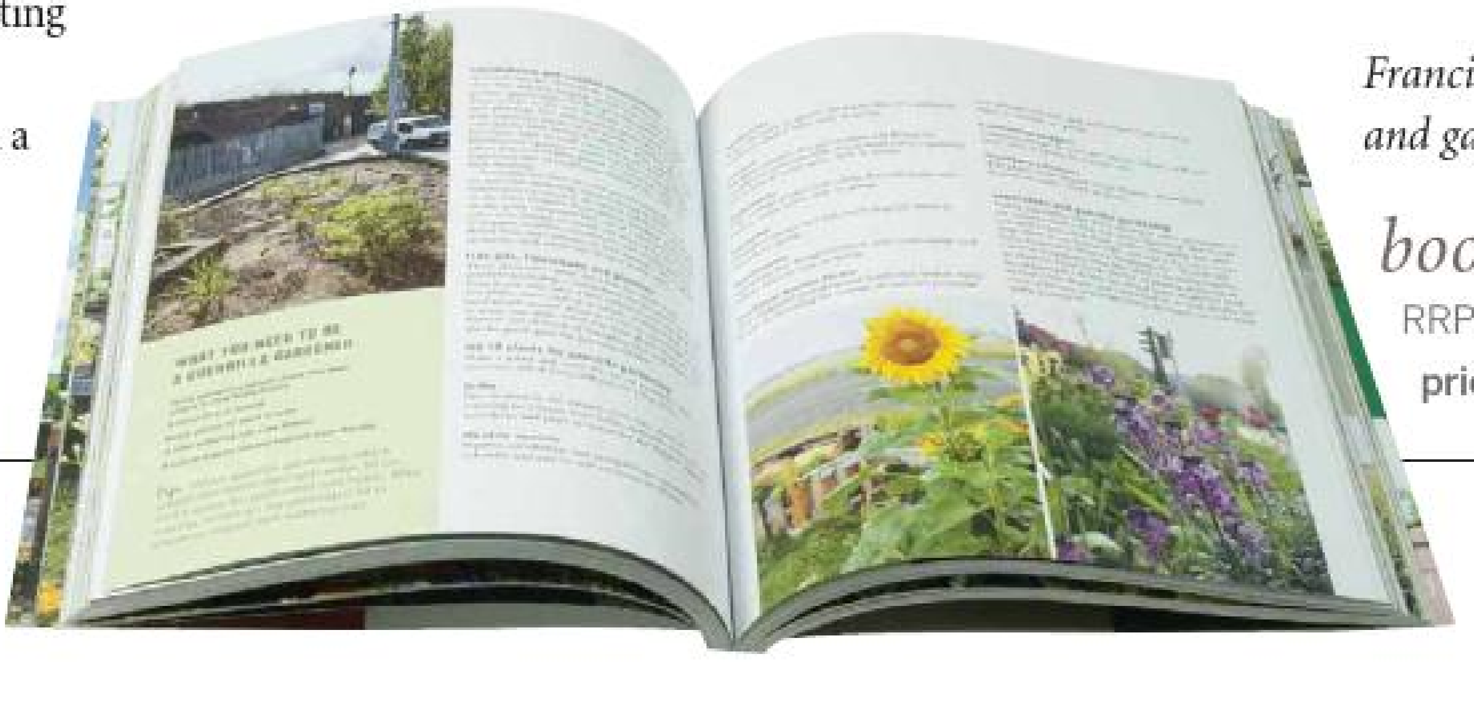
THE RURBANITE

by Alex Mitchell
Kyle Books, £16.99
ISBN 978-0857830722



With the recent death of actor Richard Briers, attention has once more been focused on the iconic 1970s sitcom *The Good Life*, in which characters Tom and Barbara attempted to create a self-sufficient idyll in the middle of town. In *The Rurbanite*, Alex Mitchell presents the 21st-century version of Tom and Barbara's world, focussing on what she calls 'rurbanite' city dwellers who crave a patch of green but have no intention of leaving town.

Growing food connects us directly to the soil and to our locality and Alex includes some inspiring case histories 'from Brooklyn to Berlin', that offer an insight into the burgeoning band of urban homesteaders and would-be city farmers who are turning their own backyards and windowboxes, as well as derelict and neglected patches of community land, into productive space. Reading how others have greened their local bus stop or are harvesting salad greens and strawberries from a paved area in a housing estate is thought-provoking.



I found the format a little muddled and I would have appreciated some informative captions to accompany Sarah Cuttle's photographs but once you start dipping into the various chapters, you find plenty to inspire committed gardeners as well as novices. There is also a stimulating section on guerilla gardening. Growing food in a builders' bag, planting an edible hedge and creating a nectar-rich windowbox are among the many well-explained, accessible projects you could get to grips with in a morning and I also enjoyed the 'list of five' approach: five continuous croppers; five crops that will put up with drought, etc.

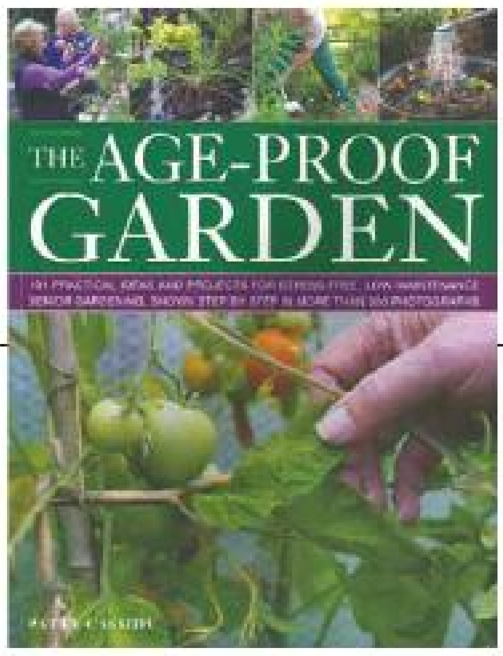
While the majority of the book concentrates on growing, there are two further chapters: one on finding wild food, flowers and wildlife in urban areas and one on keeping hens, quails, ducks and bees.

As one of Alex's case histories says, productive street gardening 'brings smiles to people's faces and plants seeds in their minds'. This is a book that helps to find the greener urban spaces and encounters with the natural world we all crave.

Paula McWaters is a gardening writer and editor

book offer

RRP £16.99. **Reader offer price £14.99** including p&p.



THE AGE-PROOF GARDEN

by Patty Cassidy
Southwater, £9.99
ISBN 978-1780191911

Having just moved from a large country garden to a smaller seaside plot, I was particularly interested in this book. Brushing aside my annoyance at being referred to as a senior, I was impressed with the range of projects and situations covered. Most were directed towards beginners using newly acquired leisure time to start gardening, rather than experienced gardeners, so labour and money-saving tips for adapting existing plots have been sacrificed for basic gardening techniques.

The sections on small-scale fruit, herb and vegetable growing are excellent; special tools and techniques for the disabled useful; the garden designs specialising on touch, sight, sound and smell are inspirational, and I'm glad writer Patty Cassidy didn't make the usual assumption that as we age, we loose our good taste and creativity and decline into a miasma of maintenance-free evergreens. The project planting plans, the overall design of the book and photographs are optimistic and stylish. So as this generation of baby bloomers is dragged raging against the dying of the light, we can rely on this book for guidance.

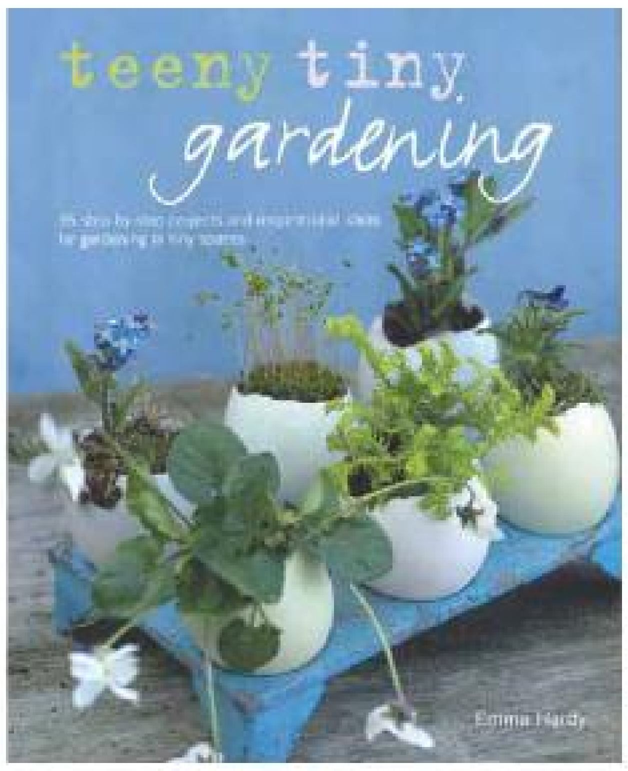
Francine Raymond is an author and gardening columnist

book offer

RRP £9.99. **Reader offer price £9.50** including p&p.

TEENY TINY GARDENING

by Emma Hardy
CICO Books, £14.99
ISBN 978-1908862808



We've had books about small gardens, and then books about really small gardens so, even as a space-constrained Londoner, I wasn't convinced the world needed a book called *Teeny Tiny Gardening*. And then I saw the cover, with its beguiling image of miniature egg shell planters, and I changed my mind.

Because let's be honest – houseplants and containers are rarely very stylish. The first time I saw a *Phalaenopsis* in a sleek cachepot it was a welcome improvement on a leggy geranium, but many years later the appeal has definitely waned and the indoor gardener's focus seems to have shifted to expensive hand-tied arrangements of imported cut flowers. So Emma Hardy's whimsical creations, captured by photographer Debbie Patterson, come as a breath of fresh air.

Her book contains 35 different projects, which at their best are fine, fanciful and guaranteed to bring a smile to your lips. What they are not is viable long-term planting solutions. But does that really matter?

Emma Hardy is a stylist and designer who claims no horticultural credentials, and though she has included a page or two of down-to-earth advice about drainage holes and liquid feed, what she has really produced is a stylish guide to the staging of temporary arrangements.

So I will gloss over her suggestion that you could get a crop of French beans and peas (plus carrots and beetroot) from one small wooden crate, and focus instead on the attractions of a vintage teacup-full of primulas, a fern terrarium or a miniature desert in shell-filled tumblers.

The moss-lined wire basket of dainty spring flowers would make a glorious Easter table centre piece before its contents were planted outside, the fairy garden complete with picket fence could tempt a new generation to get their little hands dirty, and the green-roof birdhouse should actually thrive for years to come.

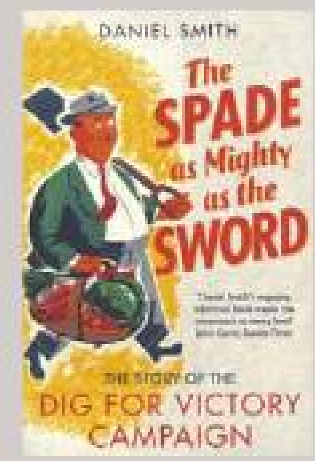
Whether you really want a suitcase full of hellebores in your garden or not, this book will certainly make you think again about what constitutes a container and how much fun you can have with a houseplant.

Jodie Jones is the former deputy editor of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED.

book offer

RRP £14.99. **Reader offer price £12.99** including p&p.

Other recently released books for gardeners


DANIEL SMITH
The SPADE as Mighty as the SWORD
THE STORY OF THE DIG FOR VICTORY CAMPAIGN

THE SPADE AS MIGHTY AS THE SWORD
by Daniel Smith
Aurum Press Ltd, £8.99
ISBN 978-1781310427
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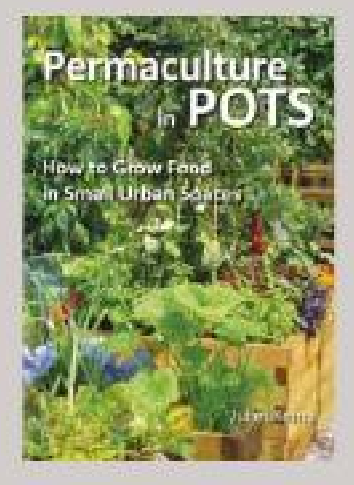
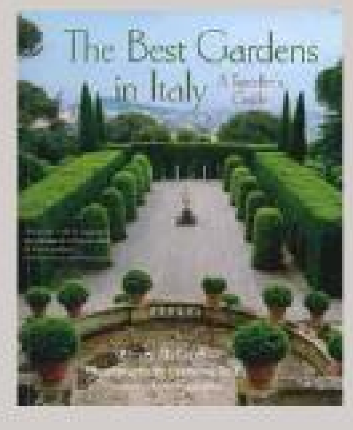
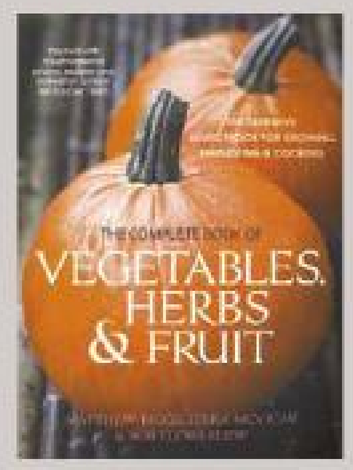


PERMACULTURE IN POTS
by Juliet Kemp
Permanent Publications, £12.95
ISBN 978-1856230971
How to grow food in pots using low-impact permaculture principles.



THE BEST GARDENS IN ITALY
by Kirsty McLeod
Frances Lincoln, £30
ISBN 978-0711231832
An attractive guide to over 100 of the finest Italian gardens open to the public.



THE COMPLETE BOOK OF VEGETABLES, HERBS AND FRUIT
by Matthew Biggs, Jekka McVicar and Bob Flowerdew
Abrams, £18.99
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Book reviews

GERANIUM

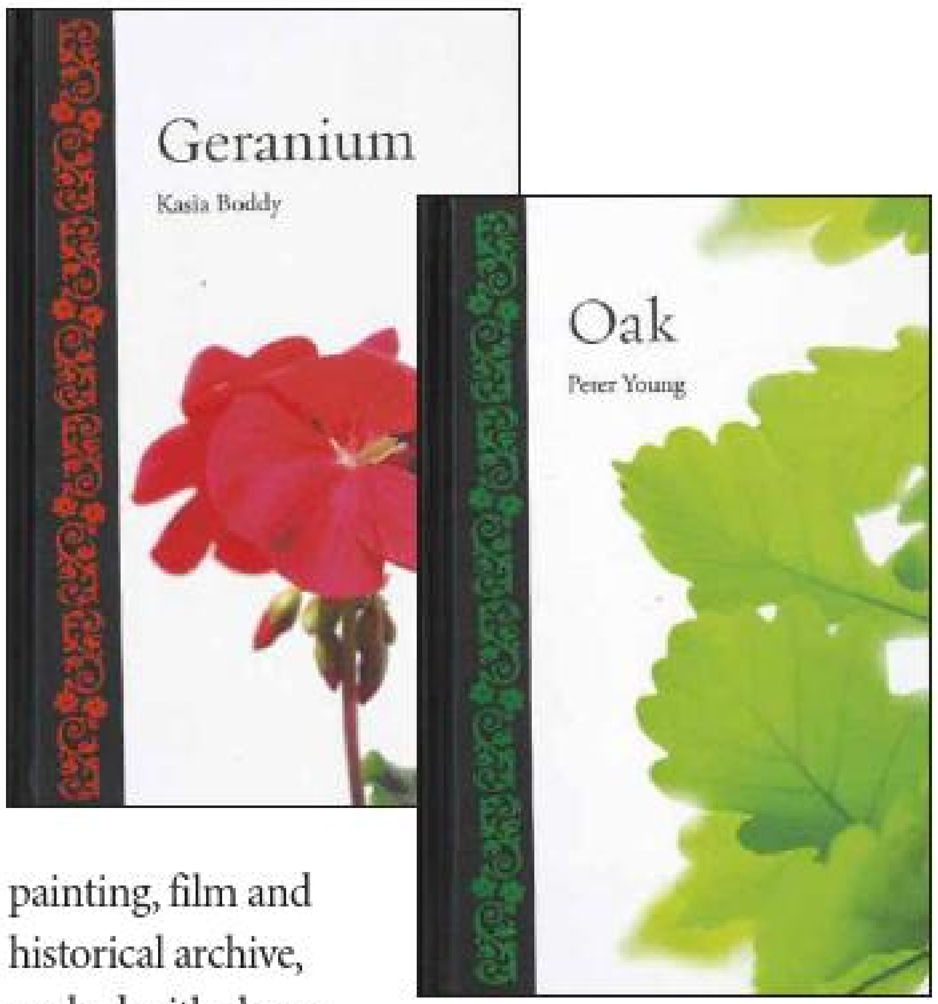
by Kasia Boddy
ISBN 978-1780230481

OAK

by Peter Young
ISBN 978-1780230375
both Reaktion Books, £16 each

A book is truly worth reading when it changes your mind. Before I opened *Geranium* I had no particular regard for the pelargonium. But from the moment Kasia Boddy launched with brio into her subject, with a wry account of Shirley Temple struggling to choose (romantically) between gardenia and geranium, the scales began to fall from my eyes.

You won't find detailed botanical information about the 16,000 plus varieties on offer to gardeners today. What you will find is a gripping account of how the pelargonium, eagerly gathered from the Cape from the late 16th century, mutated from rare hothouse exotic to humble cottage favourite and enduring symbol of hearth and home. Vehicle and emblem of self-help for the social reformers of the Victorian slums, yardstick of virtue in the late 19th-century novel, and showy pinnacle of the High Victorian garden; it becomes a painterly staple in the hands of Jekyll, blazes mindless sensuality to DH Lawrence, and for the Impressionist painters, expresses 'the sunny comforts of middle class life'. But by the 1920s, the Modernists snub it as a 'waste land of a plant – modern, disgusting and desiccated'.

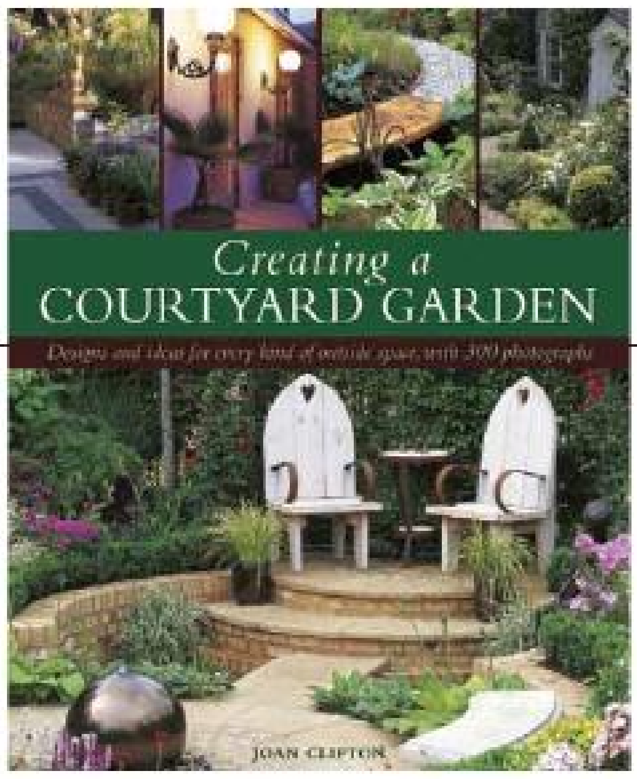


Boddy's writing is witty, deft and elegant, her scholarship lightly worn, her trawl through literature, painting, film and historical archive, packed with sharp insight. This modest book, through the medium of an unassuming plant, places gardening where it should be: a fundamental part of social history at the heart of our social, cultural and imaginative life.

Geranium is the first title in a new 'Botanical' series by Reaktion – handsome small hardbacks printed on fat glossy paper, generously illustrated, clearly intended to be a pleasure to collect. So it was with great excitement that I moved on to *Oak*, by Peter Young. The account of a tree that has played such a pivotal role in the cultural, spiritual, architectural and indeed military life of countless civilisations over millennia, would surely make fascinating reading.

Alas, no. *Oak*, instead, presented an interminable procession of wooden factoids, assembled without direction or sparkle, as if in preparation for a round of Mastermind. Which goes to show that, however promising the subject matter, the success of a book always lies in the quality of the writing.

Ambra Edwards is an author and gardens writer


Creating a
COURTYARD GARDEN
Designs and ideas for every kind of outside space, with 300 photographs
JOAN CLIFTON

CREATING A COURTYARD GARDEN

by Joan Clifton
Aquamarine, £8.99
ISBN 978-1903141045

One of the first rules when designing a successful small space is not to cram in too many different elements. It's a rule that could equally apply to this book. Designer Joan Clifton presents advice and inspiration for five different gardening styles: Smart Sanctuaries, Places to Entertain, Country Eden, Contemplative Retreats and Contemporary Spaces. With a case study, garden plan and a technical diagram for each chapter, the book offers practical insights too. The materials and plant galleries are also useful. The photography illustrates the major points successfully, although some of the gardens chosen seem to be rather a loose interpretation of a courtyard.

This book offers a good overview of key design principles and practicalities to bear in mind for a small garden. However, the main typeface used is so tiny that it is really quite hard work to read. Specialist books on courtyard garden design are rare, so while it's good to see this niche being filled by publishers Aquamarine, it's a shame they chose this format for the book.

Camilla Phelps is a garden designer and gardening writer

book offer

RRP £8.99. **Reader offer price £8.50** including p&p.

ESCORTED GARDEN HOLIDAYS

FOR DISCERNING TRAVELLERS

Our programme of Cultural Tours has been created to provide discerning travellers with a range of carefully crafted escorted holidays. Key subjects covered include Art, History, Architecture, Archaeology, Gardens & Music and groups typically consist of between 12 and 22 like-minded travellers. For full details, ask for a copy of our Cultural Tours & Music Holidays brochure.

The tours highlighted below have been selected especially to appeal to garden lovers and horticulturists.

Prices are per person and include flights, transfers, accommodation with breakfast and the services of a Kirker Tour Leader - as well as meals and guided excursions as described. Single room supplements on request.

GARDENS & GALLERIES OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR

A SEVEN NIGHT ESCORTED HOLIDAY | 1 MAY & 18 SEPTEMBER 2013

The Côte d'Azur has always been a mecca for artists and gardeners alike who are drawn by the light and climate. From our base in Nice we will explore the best gardens and art galleries in the region.

Garden visits include the Villa Ephrussi Rothschild with its important collection of fine art and famous garden, Monte Carlo's Jardin Exotique, Menton where we see the great garden of Lawrence Johnston, designer of Hidcote, Villa Kerylos and the renowned and extensive Hanbury Gardens at La Mortola across the Italian border. We will also enjoy some magnificent art with visits to several of the Côte d'Azur's finest galleries including the Marc Chagall Museum, the Fondation Maeght in Vence with its stunning collection of works by Picasso, Miró and Barbara Hepworth, Musée Matisse and the Château Grimaldi in Antibes to see the many works by Picasso which were donated to the town.

Price from £1,697 for seven nights including four dinners.

Villa Ephrussi Rothschild

SIENA & THE GARDENS OF TUSCANY

A FIVE NIGHT ESCORTED HOLIDAY | 24 APRIL & 25 SEPTEMBER 2013

The diversity and richness of Tuscany's gardens are revealed in this exploration of the region's finest examples around Siena.

Our tour is based at the charming Borgo Scopeto Relais, set against a picturesque backdrop of rolling hills, with magnificent views of Siena. Highlights include the gardens at Villa Chigi Cetinale, La Foce which was created by Iris Origo and Cecil Pinsent, Geggiano with its famous garden theatre as well as a full day exploring Siena. Gardens in Tuscany, always magnificently sited, go well beyond the seasonal charms of a colourful herbaceous border. As Edith Wharton wrote from New York in 1904, 'Italian gardens do not exist for flowers; its flowers exist for it.'

Price from £1,669 for five nights including five dinners and two lunches.

VILLAS & GARDENS AROUND ROME

A FIVE NIGHT ESCORTED HOLIDAY

13 MAY & 16 SEPTEMBER 2013

We will discover a number of wonderful gardens including the beautiful and romantic gardens of La Landriana and Ninfa.

A day will be devoted to Tivoli with its two great gardens: the Villa D'Este and Hadrian's Villa and another to Rome itself where we will visit the Villa Borghese Gardens and Gallery and a private garden. We also visit the Villa Lante at Bagnaia - one of the greatest of all Italian Renaissance gardens and the Summer and Winter Gardens of the Villa Farnese.

Price from £1,559 for five nights including three dinners and one lunch.

Park Hotel Villa Grazioli

TENERIFE – THE NATURE & HISTORY OF A VOLCANIC ISLAND

A SEVEN NIGHT ESCORTED HOLIDAY

18 NOVEMBER 2013 & 20 JANUARY 2014

The largest island in the Canaries archipelago, Tenerife is a volcanic island with an unspoilt and dramatic interior and a beautiful coastline.

Based at the 5* Hotel Botanico, we visit the perfectly preserved villages of La Orotava and Masca, the island's capital Santa Cruz and the university town of Laguna. We also explore the island's spectacular flora and fauna – the lush Botanical Garden of Tenerife, the Sitio Litre Orchid Garden where more than 300 varieties of orchid can be seen, the Parque Taoro Water Garden, the Mount Teide National Park and the wild Anaga Mountains.

Price from £1,798 for seven nights including six dinners and three lunches.

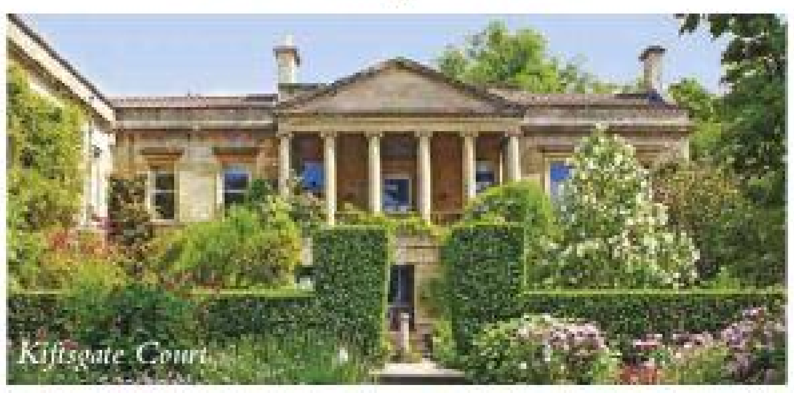
CHELTENHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

A FIVE NIGHT ESCORTED HOLIDAY | 3 JULY 2013

An inspiring holiday combining seven concerts with some of the finest gardens in the Cotswolds.

The Cheltenham Music Festival is one of the best-established English festivals. It is held in a range of venues in this elegant and well-preserved Regency spa town. Performances this year include the Belcea Quartet who are joined by Austrian pianist Till Fellner and Paul Watkins conducting the English Chamber Orchestra. Visits include Kiftsgate Court Gardens, Lawrence Johnston's series of garden rooms at Hidcote and Painswick Rococo Garden - one of the finest examples of an 18th Century garden in Europe.

Price from £998 for five nights including seven concerts and five dinners.



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WINNERS 2013

International Garden Photographer of the Year

in association with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, The National Trust and Gardens Illustrated

Beauty of Plants △

Debbie Hartley

Dogwood cover

"I was visiting the annual 'Floriade' event that is held in Canberra, Australia, and had been taking photographs of the beautiful flower displays when I came across this tree."

◁ Garden Photographer of the Year

Dennis Frates

Penstemon Sunrise

"Wind was a problem, and I had to wait a good deal of time for it to stop moving the flowers. I was excited to find an image that showed three aspects all together."

The winners of the International Garden Photographer of the Year 2013 have been announced and once again they offer a stunning collection of images that showcase the beauty of gardens, plants and landscapes in all their seasonal glory. The overall winner (above) and six of the first-place photographs from other categories are reproduced on these pages.

Many of the winning and shortlisted photographs are on display in an exhibition touring the country, stopping in Edinburgh, Carmarthen, Argyll and London before reaching the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in October.

• Prints of IGPOTY competition images are available via http://prints.kew.org. There is also a book of short-listed and winning images (£17.99), from bookshops or Kew online.

To find out more about all of this year's winners, the exhibition timetable and the shortlisted images go to **www.igpoty.com**

This year's exhibition opens at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh (22 March-26 May), as well as the National Botanic Garden, Carmarthen (29 March-15 September), Benmore Botanic Garden, Argyll (June-September), Bankside Gallery, London (8-13 July) and Kew Gardens (5 October-2 November).

INTERNATIONAL
GARDEN
PHOTOGRAPHER
OF THE YEAR
IMAGES OF A GREEN PLANET

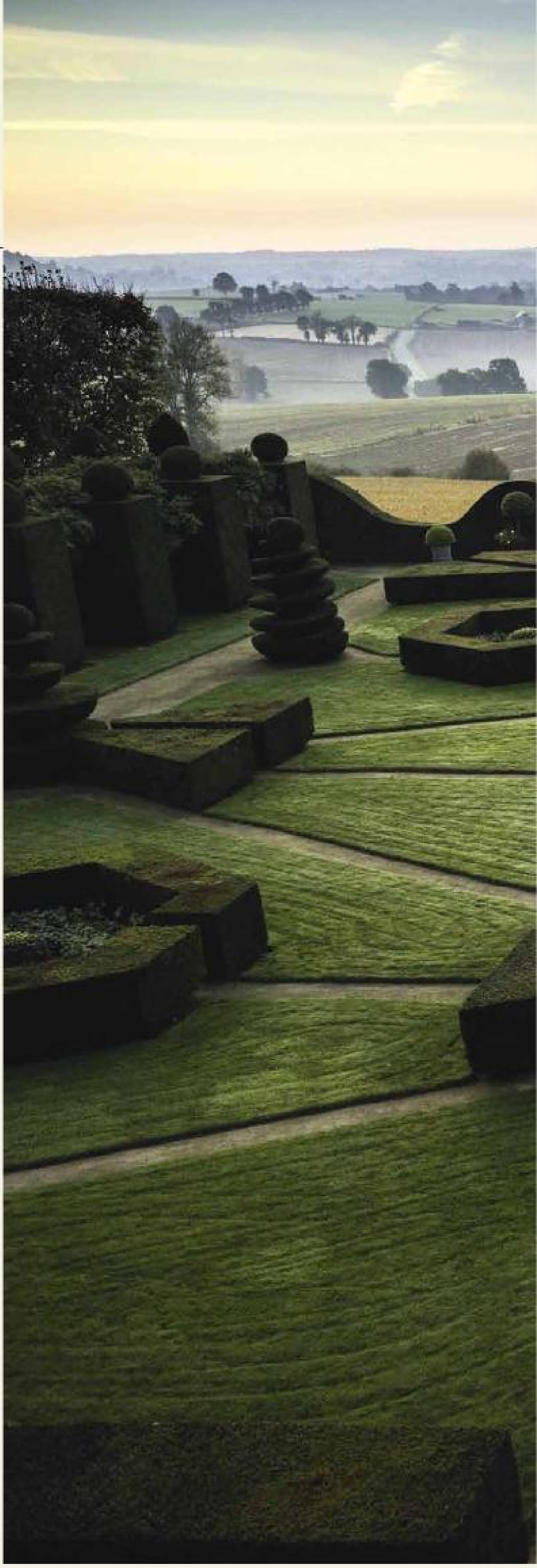
△ Breathing Spaces
Rob Hunt Kite flying on Clifton Downs

National Trust

"At the end of a bleak January day, kite flying was perfect for working up an appetite. The light was beautiful and the wind was biting."

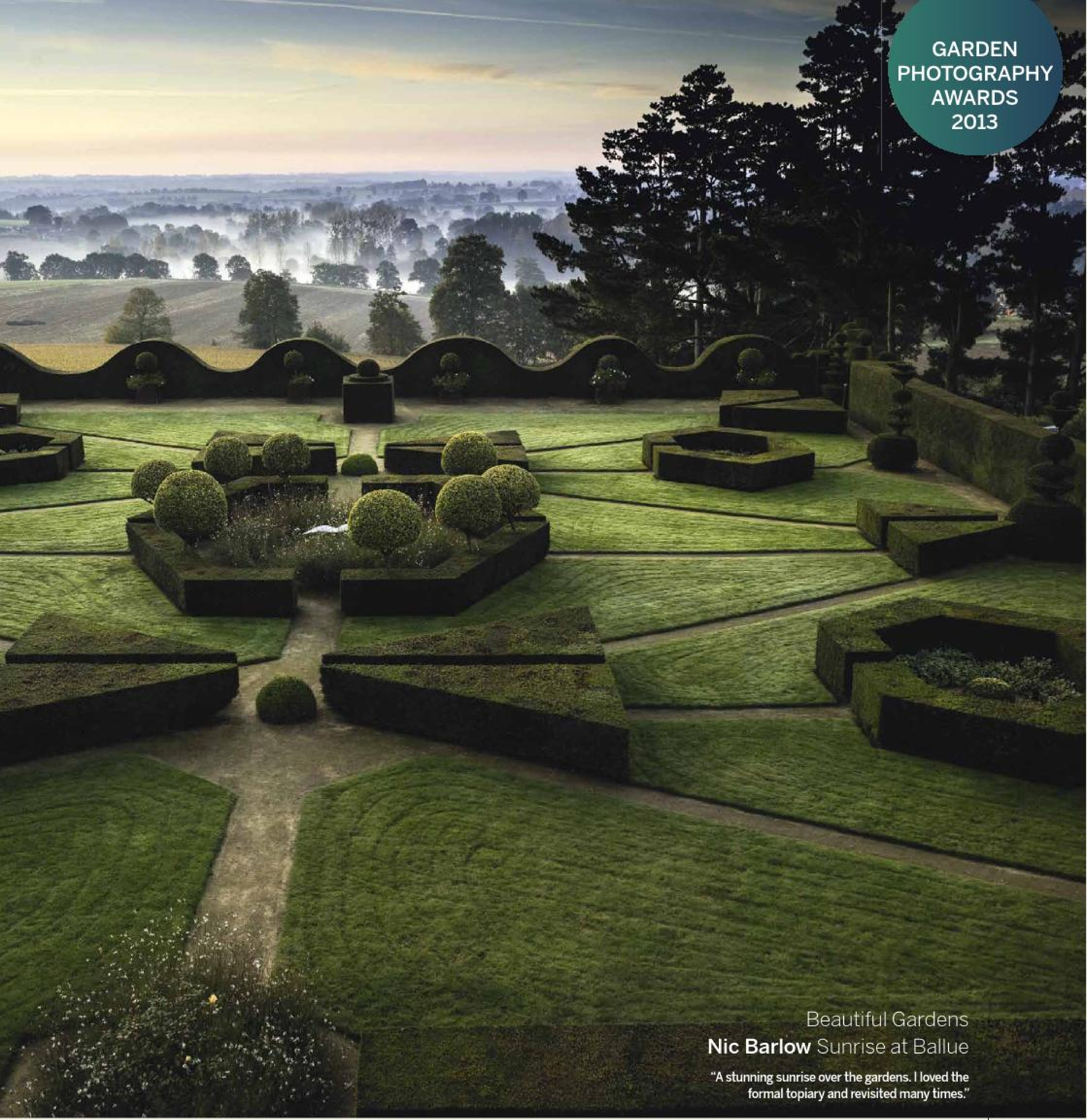
Greening the City ▷
Paul Debois Urban Forest 2

"This is a small natural haven in an area subject to heavy urban development. There is a real danger that it could be completely destroyed, so I wanted to record it."



◁ Wildlife in the Garden
Liam Marsh
Searching for Snails

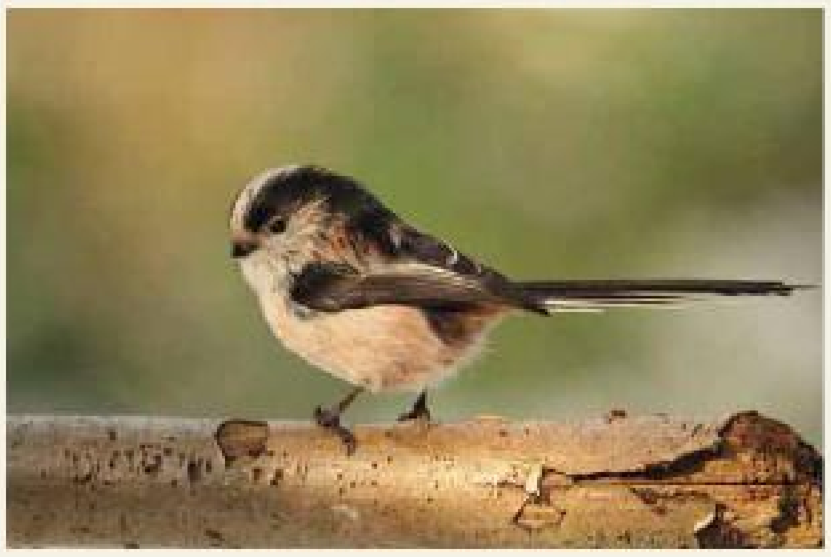
"It's really a scene from the point of view of the snail and happens in gardens every night all across the country. I wanted to capture a common scene that often goes unnoticed."



Beautiful Gardens

Nic Barlow Sunrise at Ballue

"A stunning sunrise over the gardens. I loved the formal topiary and revisited many times."



◁ Young Garden Photographer of the Year

Samuel Aron Long-tailed tit

"I found that the evening light really brought out the bird's colours and its feather detail. These birds have always been hard to photograph due to their annoying habit of always moving."

Letters

Have your say – we'd like to hear your views, so please write to us at: GARDENS ILLUSTRATED, 9th Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN, or email letters@gardensillustrated.com

Star letter

The view from Susan Boxall's house.

Canadian gardening

I look forward to receiving GARDENS ILLUSTRATED every month even though I know I will never be able to achieve the same results in my garden. You see, we live in a beautiful valley that runs through the heart of Saskatchewan's prairie landscape. The difference? In our 'normal' winters, our beds are covered with about two feet of snow.

So you will understand my laughter when I read February's 'Gardener's notes' [issue 195] where under 'Forward planning' it advised us to spread compost! My problem is that, although I do have three compost bins, they are under two feet of snow right now. But I continue to empty my compost into the compost bins – after I have donned my parka, mitts and boots.

Despite all the difficulties, I love my hobby and have now become a Master Gardener through the University of Saskatchewan. Keep up the great work so I can dream during our long winter months.

Susan Boxall, Saskatchewan

CLIMATE

Australia part one

I receive your winter editions during our summer. Here in Australia the outside temperature is well on its way to 40°C. I therefore delight in reading about the gardening lifestyle described in your pages. I find myself cooled by the beautiful photos of snow- and ice-covered vistas. I savour the articles about unfamiliar but desirable plants. I long for the opportunity to wander through some of the gardens displayed on your pages, the products of a long history, so very English and quite different from the equally beautiful gardens found here.

Jenny Schmidt, Victoria, Australia

INSPIRATION

Australia part two

I live in Australia and unfortunately there is not as strong a gardening culture as in the UK, which is why I appreciate the diversity and quality of garden design featured regularly in your magazine.

I particularly enjoyed your January issue and love that you profile gardens from other parts of the world. I was however disappointed in the Australian garden. Although the Alice Springs Botanical Garden plays an important role, it is not relevant to the bulk of Australian gardeners due to its extreme environment and remote location. I would love to read about a garden featuring design that I can learn from and implement.

Ann Robertson, by email

WRITE TO US & WIN

The star letter wins a Haws 4.5 Litre Professional Long Reach Can, worth £60, made from galvanised metal, then powder-coated for strength and long life. For details of Haws' full range go to www.haws.co.uk

CORRECTIONS

The 'Design news' section in February (issue 194) featured a softwood bench from www.rubyandbettysattic.com. Unfortunately details were given for the small version of the bench. The large bench shown is 2m long, 51cm and 94cm high, and costs £650. Apologies for any confusion this has caused.

Incorrect opening dates were given last issue for Frau Klinke's garden in Krefeld, Germany. The garden is actually open on 26 May and 23 June from 10am-6pm.

TALKING POINT

Caroline Beck welcomes the decision to put gardening on the curriculum.

Caroline Beck is a writer and gardener, and has worked on several school garden projects.

Back in the 1960s, when putting effort into growing food changed in Britain from a necessity to an eccentric hobby, well-tended school gardens fell into decline. In the last decade a movement led by parents and various horticultural organisations have put gardens back into schools and – pause for cheering – in February the Government announced that from September 2014 gardening will be back on the school curriculum. But any parent who's ever volunteered in a school garden knows that it will take more than an edict from the Department for Education to make teachers ready. They'll need convincing this is a viable subject and not a place to dump less academically able children. But when one third of school children are classed as overweight or obese and recent food scares have highlighted our vulnerability to food safety, hopefully it will focus their minds that growing food is a skill for life and not a marginal activity.

- What's your view? Write to us by post or email (details above).

We reserve the right to edit letters.

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20 years
CELEBRATE AND WIN

The first issue of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED appeared in April 1993 and included Beth Chatto writing about fritillaries, a feature on the much missed Hadspen Nurseries, then at its height, and a selection of garden features from New York State to the Norfolk Broads. To celebrate our 20th anniversary we've put together some really special competitions. Open to UK and international readers (please read all T&Cs).

COMPETITION 1 **Win a set of Fiskars' premium Quantum™ tools**

FISKARS HS102
FISKARS L106

TOTAL PRIZE VALUE £215

Long-standing Scandinavian tool manufacturer Fiskars has a new selection of premium garden tools for 2013 within the Quantum™ range. Using smooth, light and strong aluminium bodies and ground hardened steel blades, the tools, which include bypass secateurs, bypass loppers and hedge shears, are perfect for tackling your cutting and pruning tasks. In fact, cutting is 3.5 times easier than other mechanisms thanks to the patented PowerGear™ technology used for the shears and loppers. Added to this the signature cork handles provide a naturally snug and comfortable grip, shock absorbency and insulation meaning the tools not only look stylish but are a delight to use.

Fiskars believes that all things, even the simplest, can be made better and smarter so that work in the garden becomes easier, lighter, more efficient and simply more pleasurable – which is ultimately what gardening should be all about. Fiskars Quantum™ is available nationwide in garden centres, DIY stores and online. **Tel 0115 927 7335, www.fiskars.com**

What you can win

We have three sets of tools to give away – worth £215 a set.

1 x Quantum bypass secateurs £54.99

1 x Quantum bypass loppers £79.99

1 x Quantum hedge shears £79.99

How to enter

For your chance to win one of 3 sets of Fiskars Quantum™ tools, please answer the following question:

Which Scandinavian country does Fiskars hail from?
a) Finland, b) Sweden, c) Norway or d) Denmark?

Closing date 30 April 2013

Enter by post

Send a postcard with your answer, along with your name, address and contact details to:
Gardens Illustrated 196/Quantum,
PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.

Enter online

www.gardensillustrated.com

FISKARS®

TERMS AND CONDITIONS See full terms and conditions see page 125. There are three sets of Fiskars Quantum™ tools to be won to include bypass secateurs, bypass loppers and hedge shears.

COMPETITION 2 **Win a deluxe stay and private garden tour at Gravetye Manor**

TOTAL PRIZE VALUE £500

Gravetye Manor, tucked deep in the Sussex countryside, is a 16th-century manor house with a garden considered to be one of the most influential in English gardening history.

The manor was home to the creative, innovative and revolutionary gardener, William Robinson, from 1884 to 1935. Considered to be the father of the English natural garden, Robinson's ideas about naturalised planting were groundbreaking for their day and it was at Gravetye that he put his ideas into practice.

Now run as an elegant country house, the hotel has 17 bedrooms and suites – all with stunning views of the 1,000 acres of estate. Rich fabrics, fine antiques and handcrafted beds emphasise the classical beauty of the interiors. Guests can expect excellent food with dishes created from the freshest ingredients sourced from the one-acre walled kitchen garden.

To find out more about the hotel, special events held throughout the year, the history of the garden and its current restoration contact **01342 810567, www.gravetyemanor.co.uk**

Enter by post

Send a postcard with your answer, along with your name, address, postcode and contact details to:
Gardens Illustrated 196/Gravetye,
PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.

Enter online

www.gardensillustrated.com

What you can win

- Overnight stay for two at Gravetye Manor
- 3-course dinner from the A La Carte Menu on evening of arrival, plus breakfast the following morning
- A guided tour of the garden

How to enter

For your chance to win, please answer the following question:

Name the influential book William Robinson wrote in 1870 on naturalised planting.

Closing date 30 April 2013

Gravetye Manor

TERMS AND CONDITIONS See full terms and conditions see page 125. There is one prize of dinner, bed and breakfast for two at Gravetye Manor, Vowels Lane, West Hoathly, Sussex RH19 4LJ. Dinner constitutes three courses chosen from the A La Carte Menu. Drinks are not included. Breakfast is full English or continental. The garden tour will be with a senior member of the garden team. The prize is valid until 31 October 2013 and is subject to availability. The winner is responsible for their own travel to and from the hotel. Personal costs and expenditure are not included. Gravetye Manor would like to keep you informed by email, post or phone of their special offers and promotions. Please write 'Do not contact Gravetye' on your entry if you would prefer not to receive these.

20 years
CELEBRATE AND WIN

COMPETITION 3 **Win two places on a Bettys Cookery School course**

TOTAL PRIZE VALUE £350

Bettys is renowned for its fine teatime treats and confectionery, so it seemed only natural to draw on the rich resource of specialists who work at Bettys Craft Bakery to establish the Bettys Cookery School. Based in Harrogate, the School offers a range of practical courses and demonstrations aimed at encouraging us to get the best out of simple, honest, quality ingredients.

New to this year's Cookery School offering is the **Seasonal Supper** course (£175 per person), which aims to make the most of the array of fresh ingredients that become available as the growing season progresses. You'll create a three-course dinner using the best fare. The menu includes a delicate savoury asparagus cheesecake with a quenelle of crab (pictured top right); a light spring lamb and spelt cassoulet; and a moreish rhubarb and custard roulade with rhubarb and ginger syrup.

For further details of this and all courses run by Bettys Cookery School go to **www.bettyscookeryschool.co.uk** or call **01423 814016** to request a copy of the new Spring to Autumn 2013 course calendar. The Cookshop, which stocks a selection of high quality knives, saucepans, bake and cookware and also specialist equipment for bread and chocolate making, can also be accessed online for those unable to visit the Cookery School.

Enter by post

Send a postcard with your answer, along with your name, address, postcode and contact details to:
Gardens Illustrated 196/Bettys, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.

Enter online

www.gardensillustrated.com

What you can win

Two places on the Seasonal Supper course, on 28 June 2013, for one winner plus guest

How to enter

For your chance to win, please answer the following question:

What type of food is spelt?
a) vegetable b) grain
c) dairy product

Closing date 30 April 2013

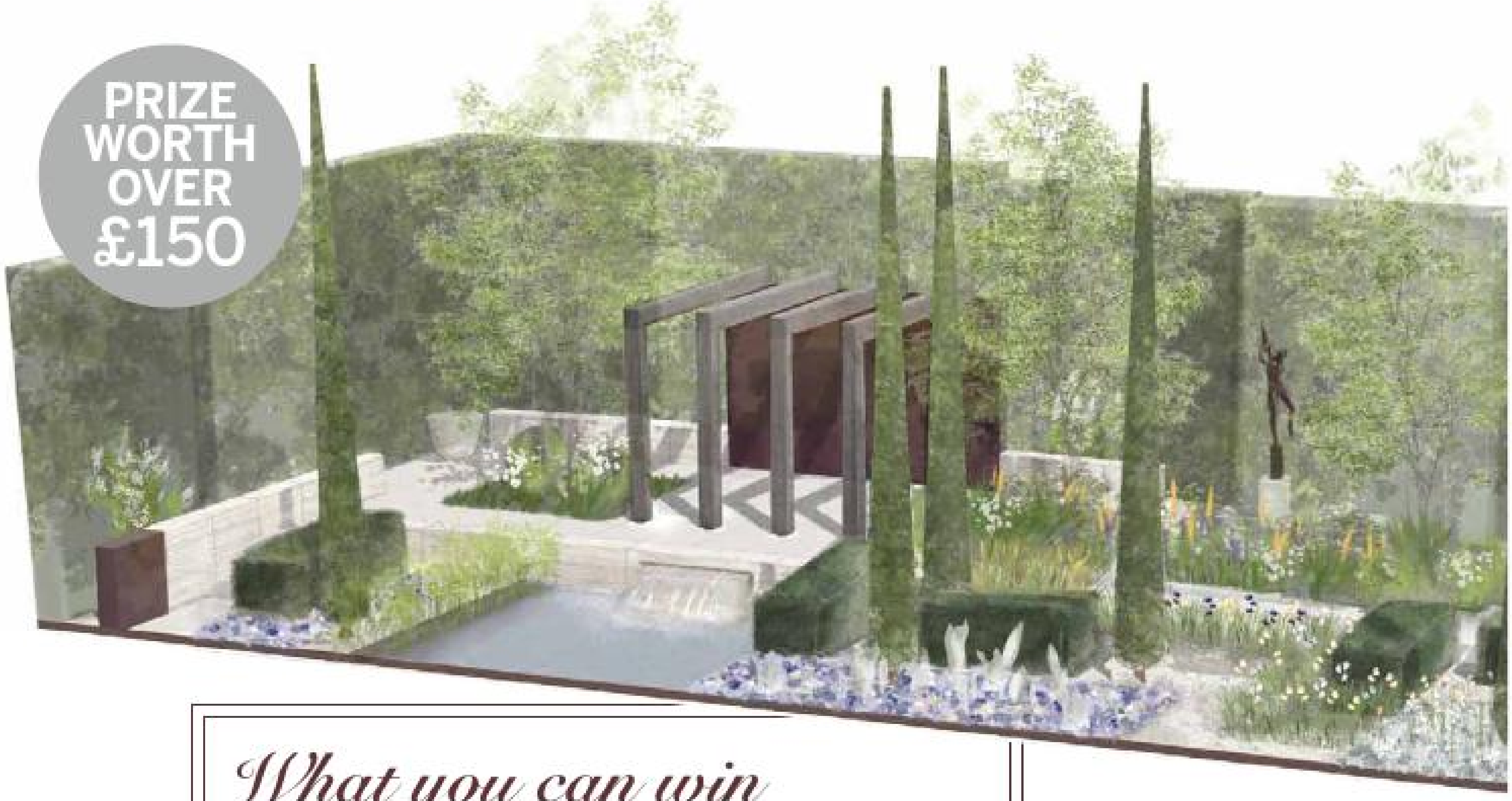
Bettys Cookery School

TERMS AND CONDITIONS See full terms and conditions opposite. There is one prize of two places on Bettys Cookery School Seasonal Supper course, on 28 June 2013. The course runs from 9am-4.30pm and is based at Bettys Cookery School, Hookstone Park, Hookstone Chase, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 7LD, UK. Travel and other expenses are not included.

COMPETITION 4 **VIP tickets to Chelsea Flower Show**

This year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show is a landmark occasion as the show celebrates its centenary. Among the impressive show gardens competing for gold is the 15th Laurent-Perrier garden, designed by renowned, award-winning Swedish garden designer Ulf Nordfjell. Combining themes of Swedish minimalism and French heritage with traditional and sustainable English perennials such as lavender and iris, the Laurent-Perrier garden promises to offer a romantic escape with a contemporary twist.

PRIZE WORTH OVER £150



What you can win

A pair of tickets to the Chelsea Flower Show for Thursday 23 May, plus a glass of champagne each, served alongside the Laurent-Perrier garden

How to enter

For your chance to win, please answer the following question:

Who designed the Laurent-Perrier show garden for Chelsea 2012?

Closing date 30 April 2013

CHAMPAGNE
Laurent-Perrier
MAISON FONDÉE
1812

Enter by post

Send a postcard with your answer, along with your name, address, postcode and contact details to: Gardens Illustrated 196/Laurent-Perrier Chelsea, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.

Enter online

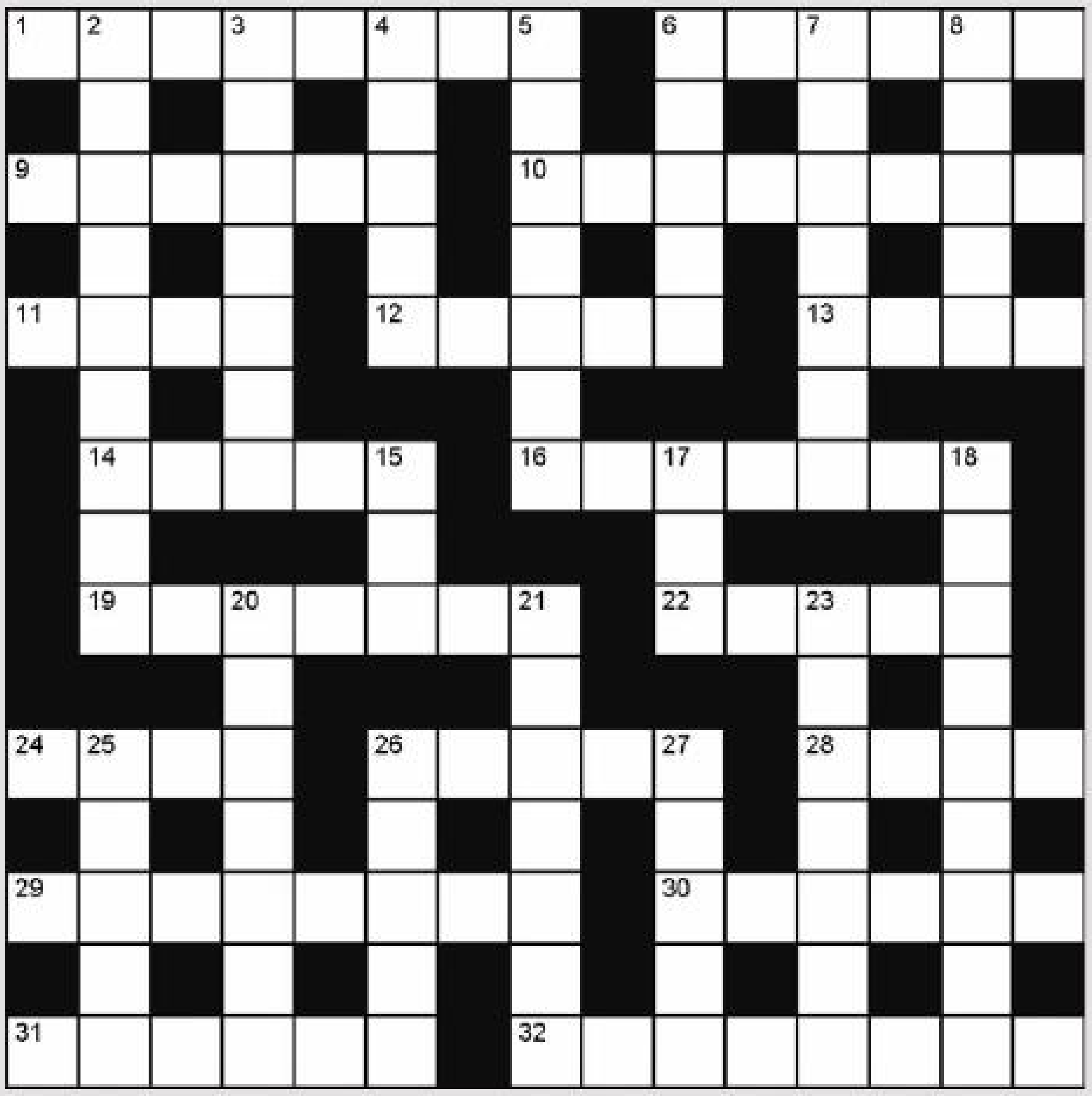
www.gardensillustrated.com

TERMS AND CONDITIONS See full terms and conditions opposite. There is one prize of a pair of tickets provided by Laurent-Perrier to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, on 23 May 2013. This prize includes one glass of Laurent-Perrier Brut champagne per person at the side of the Laurent-Perrier garden. Tickets will not be valid for entry on any other day. Travel and other expenses are not included.

Terms and Conditions for all competitions

1 The promoter is Immediate Media Company Bristol. 2 Entrants must be aged 18 years or older, excluding the promoter's employees 3 The closing date for all entries is 23.59 GMT on Tuesday 30 April 2013. Entries received after the closing date of the promotion will not be considered. 4 By entering the promotion, the participants agree to be bound by all the rules of the promotion. 5 Entrants must supply to Immediate Media Co their full name, email address and daytime telephone number. The Promoter will use entrants' personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy (www.immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy). 6 Only one entry will be permitted per person, regardless of method of entry. 7 The winning entrants for each competition will be the first correct entries drawn at random from all the correct entries after the closing date. 8 The draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The winner will be notified within ten days of the close of the promotion by post/telephone/email. 9 There is no cash alternative and the prizes are not transferable. Each prize must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. The Promoter reserves the right to substitute a prize with one of the same or greater value. 10 For details of the winners send an SAE to Immediate Media Company Bristol, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN within two months of the closing date. 11 The Promoter does not accept any responsibility for lost, delayed or fraudulent entries. 12 If the winner is unable to be contacted within 20 days of the promotions' closing date, the Promoter reserves the right to offer a prize to a runner up, or to re-offer the prize in any future promotion. 13 The Promoter excludes liability to the full extent permitted by law for any loss, damage or injury occurring to the participant arising from his or her entry into the promotion or occurring to the winner arising from his or her acceptance of a prize. 14 Each promotion is subject to the laws of England. By entering, you undertake that you are not contravening any laws local to you. 15 Immediate Media Company Limited (publishers of *Gardens Illustrated*) would love to keep you informed by post or telephone of special offers and promotions from the Immediate Media Company Group. Please write 'Do not contact Immediate Media Co Ltd' if you would prefer not to receive these. *Gardens Illustrated* would like to keep you informed of newsletters, special offers and other promotions by email or text message. Please write your email address and mobile number on your postcard if you would like to receive these. You may unsubscribe from these at any time.

Crossword



ACROSS

1 The wallflower genus, profiled this month (8)
6 Large, dessert pear – mostly funny! (6)
9 Potato king? (6)
10 Like the tough leaves of eg a laurel (8)
11 Self-fertile dessert plum – found in crop always (4)
12 Produce from a vegetable plot? Give up! (5)
13 Unfeeling part of green umbellifer (4)
14/15 Triangular-headed weeding tool (5,3)
16 Abnormal tree growth on eg oak – blasted by tall gun! (7)
19 See 3dn.
22 18th-century German botanical illustrator – turned three! (5)
24 Old sailor used to kill slugs? (4)
26 Method of propagation that's hard work (5)
28 Brownish-yellow colour (4)
29 Plant of *Aster* genus makes straw rot (8)
30 *Platanus* x *hispanica* is the __ plane tree (6)
31 Vegetables for environmentalists? (6)
32 Digs up and puts elsewhere in the garden (8)

DOWN

2 Ruddy arachnid, a mite annoying in the greenhouse! (3,6)
3/19 Red athletes climbing in the vegetable garden? (7,7)
4 Like waterlogged soil (5)
5 Common name for *Verbascum* – 'Ill Menu' maybe (7)
6 Edible beet leafstalk – cold and firm (5)
7 Evergreen shrub of *Berberis* family – aha, I'm no different! (7)
8 Caraway genus – in lilac arums (5)
15 See 14ac.
17 Part of foot – seen at end of white-berried shrubby plant! (3)
18 A killer of tender plants at this time of year (4,5)
20 Hazel, for example – silly brunette, losing head! (3,4)
21 Loosely disperse … rotten 'taters' round top of compost (7)
23 False acacia – from Nairobi, perhaps (7)
25 Flower for a 20th anniversary in glass terrarium (5)
26 Cultivates … geraniums, initially, by lines (5)
27 Spring bulb strangely lit up (5)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

MARCH'S SOLUTIONS
ACROSS: 1 Sandy **4** Hickory **8/15** Dogtooth violet **9** Ties up **10** Acre **11** Sprig **13** Alga **14** Polygala **17** Edible **19** Fir tree **21** Culm **23** Peony **24** Digs **25** Broad **27** Espalier **29** Blisters **30** Tisane.

DOWN: 1 Snowcloud **2** Nuttery **3** Yeo **4** Hoheria **5/19** Cut flowers **6** Oregano **7** Young **11** Stake up **12** Giverny **16** Evergreen **18** Bamboos **20** Riddles **22** Umbel **26** Dye **28** Pot.

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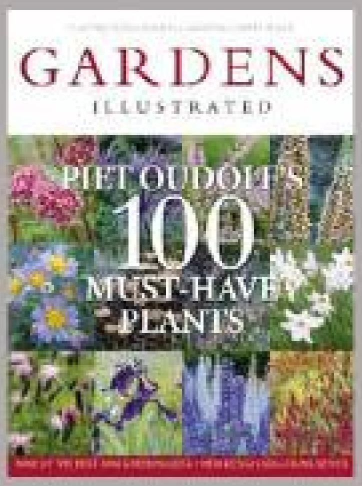
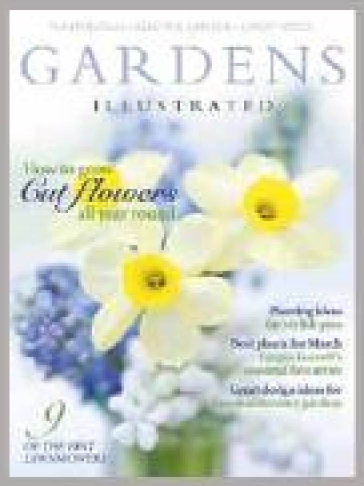
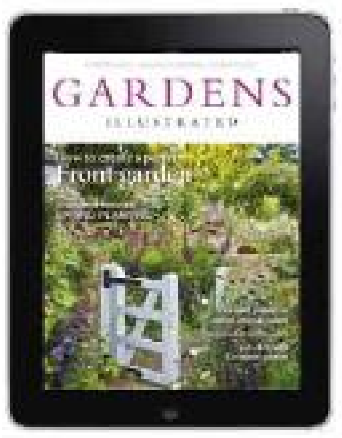


FEBRUARY 2013
Piet Oudolf's 100 must-have plants; nine of the best mini-greenhouses; the best violas profiled; snowdrops at The Garden House; early spring at Dial Park in Worcestershire.



MARCH 2013
How to grow cut flowers all year round; planting ideas for stylish pots; creating a nuttery; ideas for low-maintenance gardens; nine of the best lawnmowers.



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The Splendid Spring

Spring is a marvellous time in the garden, with so much to see, do and enjoy. A variety of plants, styles and ideas can found within all of the splendid gardens below, so take the time to make a visit and embrace this blossoming time of year.

1. BATSFORD ARBORETUM

Enjoy breath-taking views and magical walks through a stunning collection of Japanese Flowering Cherries, Magnolias and spring flowers. There's fabulous, freshly-baked food in the Garden Terrace Cafe, gifts galore, shabby chic vintage finds in the Applestore and a well-stocked Garden Shop and Plant Centre bursting with everything you need for the gardening year ahead. Open daily 10am to 5pm.

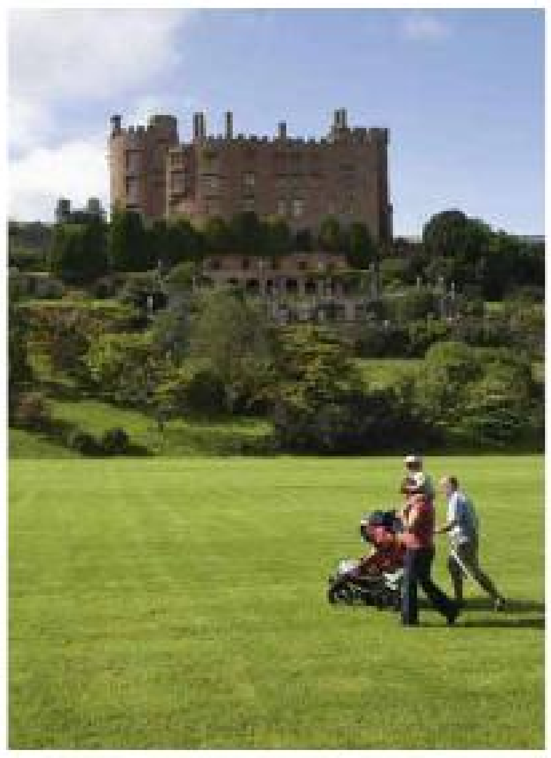
ADDRESS **Batsford, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 9AB**
WEBSITE **www.batsarb.co.uk** TEL **01386 701441**

2. WATERPERRY GARDENS

Celebrate spring at Waterperry Gardens with Fritillaries. See the county flower of Oxfordshire in all its native splendour as it flowers throughout April in our wildflower meadow and riverside walk. Don't miss the Fritillary weekend 20th & 21st April. Beautiful gardens, plant centre, garden shop, gallery, gift barn and teashop. 10am to 5pm. Party bookings welcome by arrangement.

ADDRESS **Waterperry, Near Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1JZ**
WEBSITE **www.waterperrygardens.co.uk** TEL **01844 339254**

3. POWIS CASTLE AND GARDEN



Discover the treasures of the castle and Clive museum, or simply explore the wonders of the garden with their italianate terraces. Make sure you visit Powis for an incredible spring day out.

Garden open daily (closed 25 Dec)

March & Oct:	**11 – 4.30**
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ADDRESS **Welshpool SY21 8RF**
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ADDRESS **Bullers Way, Abbotsbury, Dorset DT3 4LA**
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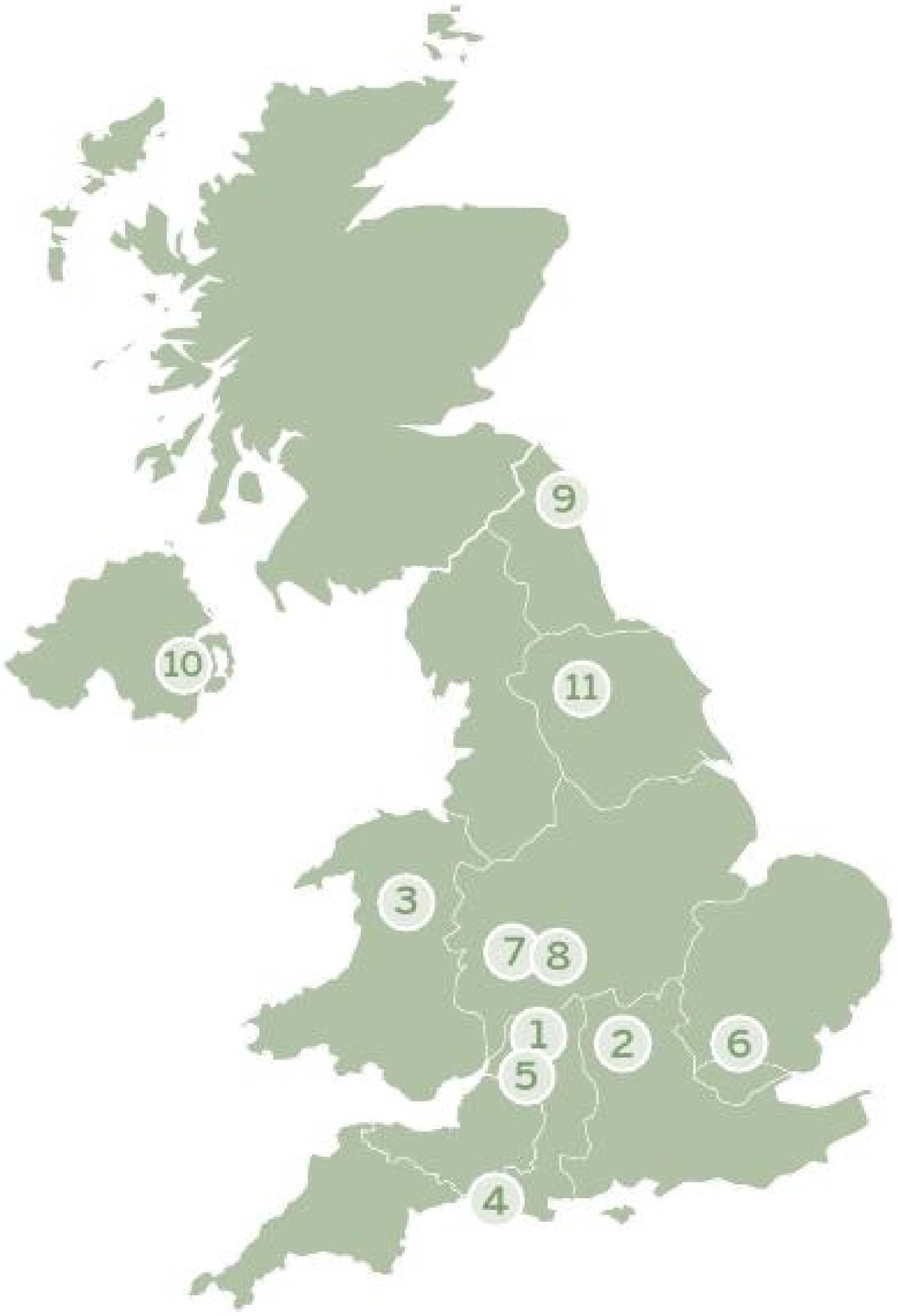

7. HAMPTON COURT CASTLE & GARDENS

The Gardens at Hampton Court Herefordshire are one of the most ambitious garden creations of our time. In addition to stunning new flower gardens divided by intricate canals, there is a maze of a thousand yews, and at its centre a stunning gothic tower offering panoramic views of the gardens in all their glory. A truly spectacular Spring visit.

ADDRESS **Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 0PN**
WEB **www.hamptoncourt.org.uk** TEL **01568 797777**

8. COUGHTON COURT

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ADDRESS **Coughton Court, Warwicks B49 5JA**
WEBSITE **www.coughtoncourt.co.uk** TEL **07592 775 177**

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10. AIRTRICITY GARDEN FESTIVAL, HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE

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ADDRESS **Hillsborough Castle's gardens, Co. Down BT26 6DU**
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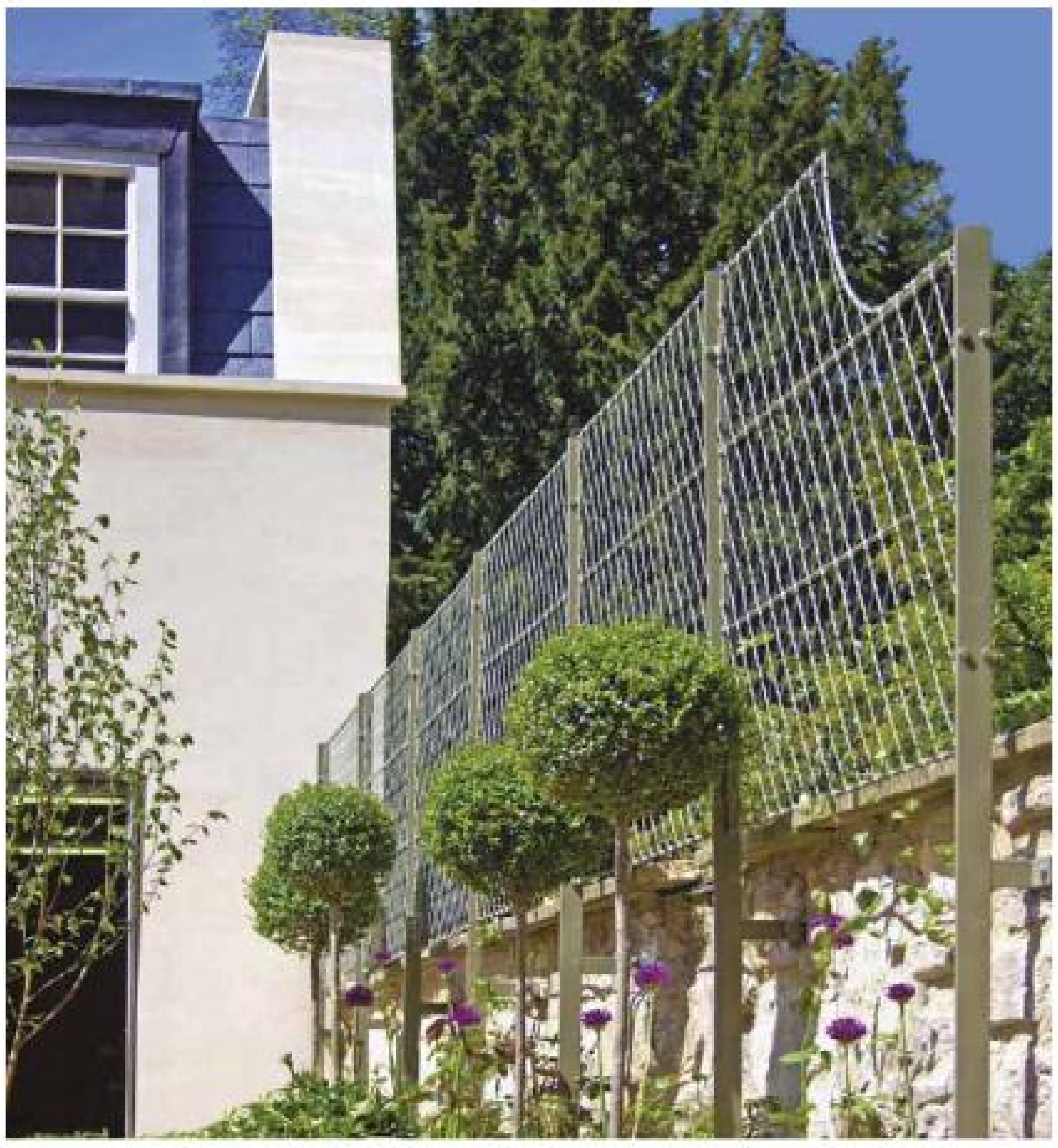

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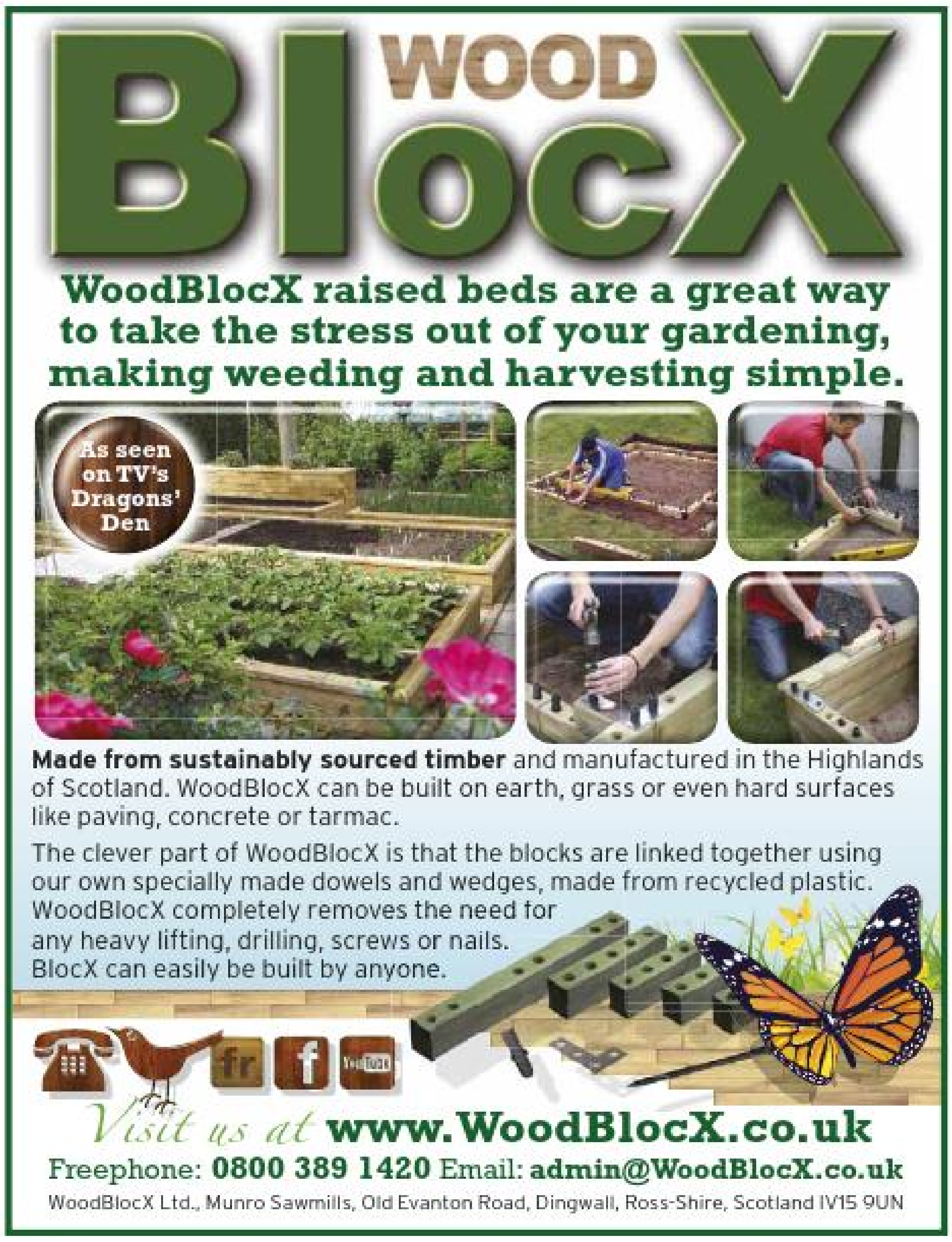

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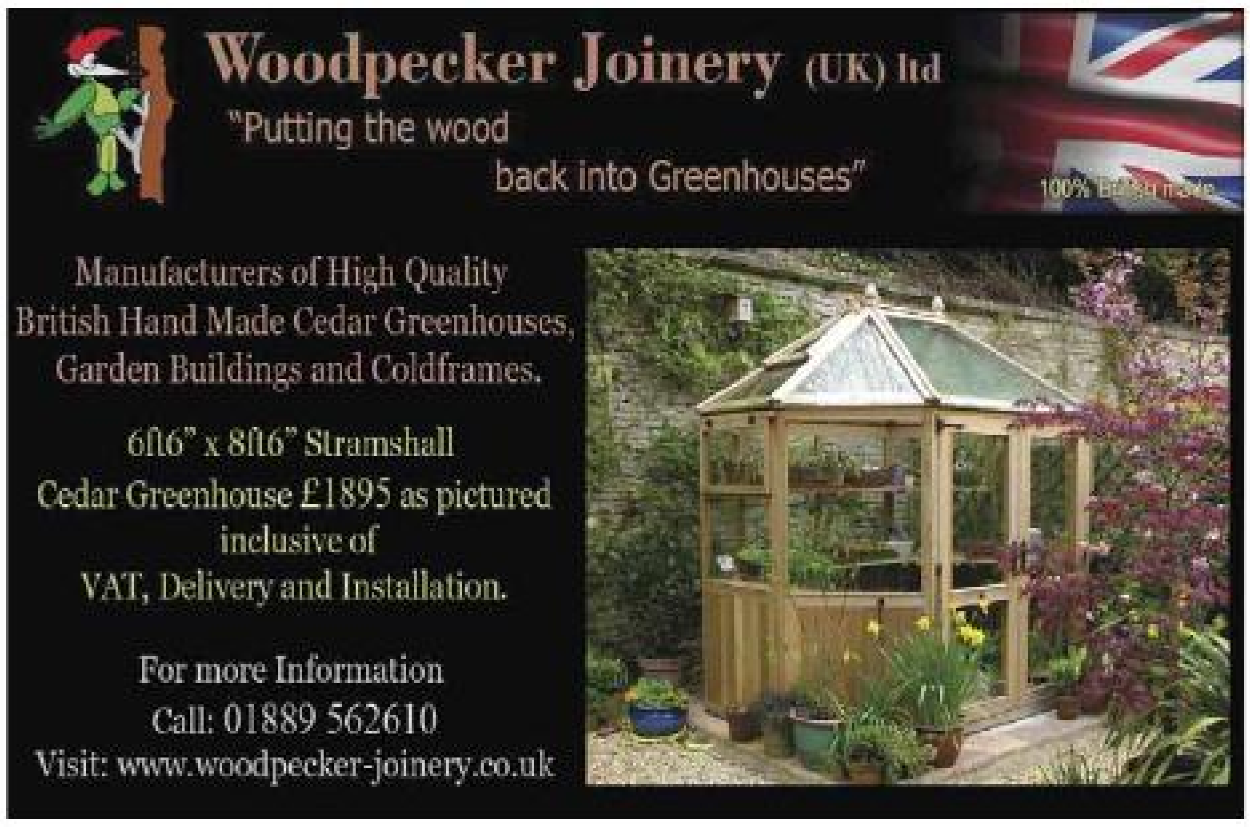

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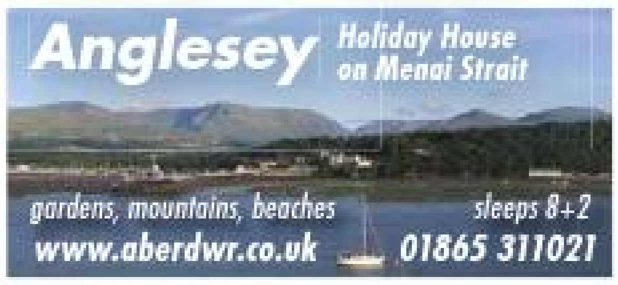

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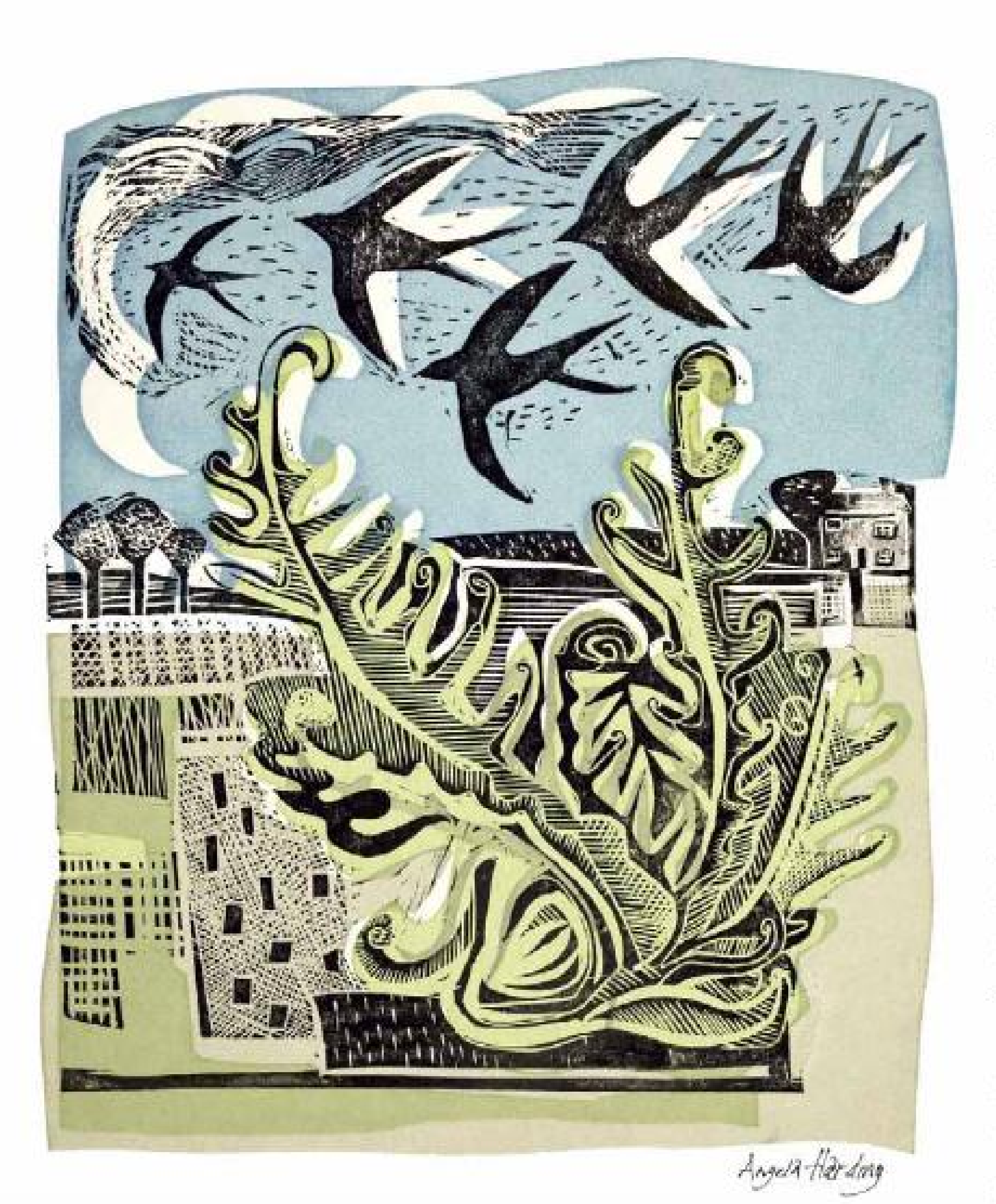
LYNN KEDDIE

Modest intricacy

Our columnist ruminates on the subtle delights of ferns

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **ANGELA HARDING**

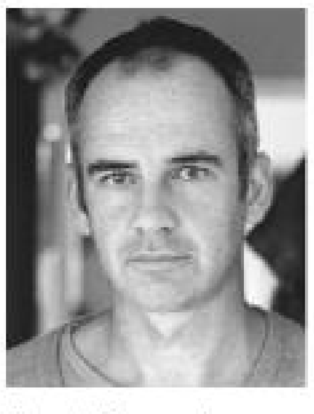


"They don't shout for notice but once they are noticed possess infinite detail and variety"

The first crozier to unfurl itself from a tight bun of fern is about the most graceful thing that can happen in a garden. All winter they will have been fattening in slumber, hirsute backs turned to the weather, and now this one pioneering frond bestirs itself to untuck a head from the bedmates and sniff the air, before arching back and flinging wide the pinnae. It is an omen that spring is about to become rampant.

Forgive my anthropomorphism, but that is nothing compared with the common explanation for pteridology becoming such a fad in the nineteenth century: that it was a branch of botany which could be studied by young ladies without inflaming and discomposing their minds with the unseemly minutiae of sexual reproduction. Flowers have rude bits; ferns do not. Which is a nice theory, though it is hard to imagine that an existence so sheltered would allow for scrambling through the woods with hitched skirts and a ferning trowel.

More likely it was only that ferns coincided with the prevailing aesthetic: lush and intricate and slightly gothic, yet somehow modest. They don't shout for notice but once they are noticed possess infinite detail and variety. The mania was for hunting down unusual variants of common natives, notably the lady fern and the male fern (both scrupulously hermaphrodite in fact, so no corrupting shenanigans there), of each of which there are hundreds of varieties still in cultivation. I particularly like *Athyrium filix-femina* 'Frizelliae', the tatting fern, not only for an extraordinary appearance, but because I had assumed that the name came from the frizziness before being told of the discoverer, a Mrs Frizell of County Wicklow. You wonder, every time you see it, whether it was part of her plan when she married Mr Frizell.



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire

Novelties and oddities are fine in small doses, but you don't want a whole garden of them competing for quirkiness. A crested or a curly fern here and there adds to the fun, but jokes do not bear much repetition, whereas beauty does, and on that account there are some ferns which I could never have enough of. Dear old Bevis springs to mind immediately. It is a form of the soft shield fern, *Polystichum setiferum*, found by a Devon hedgecutter called Bevis in 1876, since which time the botanists have been squabbling about whether to call it 'Plumosum Bevis' or 'Pulcherrimum Bevis'. An exquisite, upswept thing, instantly recognisable, even at a distance. Although there is a nice old colony steadily increasing, I still grab another whenever I see one.

The other best of the best of ferns has to be *Dryopteris wallichiana*, a buckler that stands as a single crown with golden-hued foliage brightened further by nearly black scales on the rachis. The colours are best in spring and every year it gets a little more substantial and beautiful, without seeming to feel much need to ramify. If it did, I'd pull the pup off at once. The ordinary shuttlecock, *Matteuccia struthiopteris*, which tends to run about like a rabbit, benefits hugely from this sort of infanticide. If you are diligent in ripping out the runners, the central crown can get to a spectacular size. I tried, but I wasn't diligent enough.

I wasn't diligent enough for tree ferns either, although my passion for *Cyathea dealbata* used to verge on the indecent and thoughts of *C. tomentosissima* make me blush even now. With the kind of winters we've been having lately I've finally learned to turn my back on tender ferns. Except *Woodwardia radicans*, which is not so very tender, and is as exotic as any tree fern, with great sprawling fronds reaching out to plant their bulbils in neighbouring pots. The maidenhair, *Adiantum pedatum*, looks as though it should be tender, but it romps through my friend Laura's kitchen garden in Holland and originates in the colder still north-eastern states of America. Bright green leaflets tremble on rings of black wire. You can't help lusting for sheets of it. □

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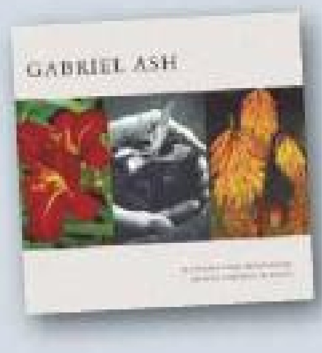

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